

Poems

By

Louise Vickroy Boyd





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POEMS

BY

LOUISE VICKROY BOYD
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EDITED BY

ESTHER GRIFFIN WHITE



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LOUISE VICKROY BOYD

THE following appreciation of Louise Vickroy Boyd, written by Mrs. Grace Julian Clarke, appeared in the *Indianapolis Star*, a few days after Mrs. Boyd's death, and was widely read.

Mrs. Clark, one of the leaders in the social, club and literary life of the state, being president of the Indiana Federation of Women's Clubs, and having a national reputation as a social worker and writer, was the long-time friend of the author of this volume of verse, being the daughter of George W. Julian, a celebrity of this commonwealth, and one of the best-known public men of his day.

Mr. and Mrs. Julian were the intimates of Dr. and Mrs. Boyd and frequently visited in the latter's home, and, in later years, the annual visits of Mrs. Boyd to Mrs. Clarke, in Indianapolis, were the events of the former's last years. Many were the eulogiums passed by Mrs. Boyd upon her "dear friend, Grace Julian Clarke," for whom she entertained the most profound devotion. Mrs. Clarke's summing up, therefore, is of peculiar interest.

A GIFTED WOMAN'S LONG LIFE

THE death of Louise V. Boyd, widow of Dr. S. S. Boyd, of Dublin, Wayne County, removes one of the most widely-known women of eastern Indiana. As Louise Vickroy she made a reputation as a teacher, lecturer and writer of verse, as long ago as the fifties. An opponent of slavery, a believer in woman's enfranchisement and a friend of humanity, she labored with tongue and pen during her earlier years to bring about better conditions. On her marriage to Dr. Boyd the career of domestic life absorbed her attention, and their hospitable home was the rallying point for workers in every line of beneficent endeavor. What a delightful home it was, with its old-fashioned rooms, filled with books; its beautiful flowers, its bountiful board, and especially its atmosphere of high thinking and earnest purpose! It was peculiarly attractive to young people, the doctor and his wife drawing to them thoughtful young men and women in various walks of life.

Since the death of her husband, Mrs. Boyd has lived with her stepson, Dr. Horace Boyd, of Cambridge City, making frequent visits to friends in Pennsylvania, her girlhood home, and in this state.

Poems of hers have appeared from time to time in *Scribner's* and other magazines, but she has not written much lately. Her death occurred at eighty-two years. But who ever thought of age in the presence of this always youthful woman? She had the enthusiasm, the buoyant spirits, the genuine delight in good literature, and in people, of a person of half her years. In a letter of June 19 last, she said:

"The spring seems to have had a hard time to get here, and cold, cheerless weather is hard to endure when June comes. But as Riley said sometime since, 'The trees are as green as the grass is, and the grass as green as the trees.' What need of adding more?"

That statement is simplicity itself, and Victor Hugo makes simplicity and sublimity one and the same. * * * But what am I, and what doing? I am very nearly nobody, and have been jogging along at the same old pace. I have, however, kept well, and read a great deal, several of Fiske's Colonial Histories, Story's 'Life of Charles Sumner,' a few novels, and Van Dyke's 'Holy Land.' Then I have renewed my acquaintance with dear, delightful Hawthorne. You know his 'Blithedale Romance' is my favorite of his longer stories, and I was so glad when I found it was his own favorite. Of his 'Mosses from an Old Manse,' 'The Virtuoso's Collection' is the best of all—a piece of ideal reality most delicious.

"I am putting my soul into my Bible class work. It is hardly so easy as it was two years ago. Now I nearly sink under the responsibility of keeping up a reputation! Maybe that is why I am growing gray so rapidly; yet I rejoice heartily that I can use my hands, my feet and my eyes."

Her letters reveal her admirably, and every one of them is worth while. She herself was worth while—an original character, of decided likes and dislikes, fearless in declaring them, a good hater and a devoted lover. She had her prejudices, which she frankly admitted, and what sharp things she could say! She particularly disliked pretense and shams, and was scathing in her denunciation of them.

* * * * *

As a story writer, she rivals Scheherezade, and her advent was the signal for all the children to gather about with requests for the Donkey story, or the Cat and the Coffee-grinder, or some other of the countless number at her command.

Her memory was the most remarkable I have ever known, and if every copy of the Waverley novels had been lost I believe she could have written out a fairly accurate reproduction, as she could of hundreds of other books. Her mind was a storehouse of poetry, too, Byron and Poe being her especial favorites. She loved some of the lesser poets, and sent me one Christmas a volume of Father Tabb's verse. This reminds me of her regard for Catholics. She had none of that intolerance of the Mother Church which is not

uncommon, and used to write about going to hear a certain priest, whose sermons always "meant something," which was more than she could say of some others.

In her last letter, already referred to, she said, "O, for the good old days when people said something!" and apropos of a certain "popular" preacher, she remarked:

"He might have been the original of the man in the old play who orated thus: 'Go call a coach, and let a coach be called, and let the person calling be the caller'."

Mrs. Boyd talked a great deal;—but then she "always said something," and always made one think. As she rose to bid good-bye to her hostess one day, she assured the latter that she had had a delightful call, whereupon, remarking that she herself had done most of the talking, she said that she was like Madame de Stael in one respect at least. A friend of the celebrated French-woman took a young man to call upon her one day, and a few days later Madame de Stael, meeting the lady, exclaimed: "What an interesting person your young friend is!" "Alas," replied the lady, "the poor young man has been deaf and dumb from his birth!"

It is impossible to realize that this dear, engaging, honest and gifted woman will come no more to gladden our hearts and quicken our sensibilities. She was one of those personalities that one simply cannot think of as extinguished. Such vivid and pulsating life snuffed out! Not a bit of it! Somewhere and somehow Louise Vickroy Boyd lives and loves, in a fuller sense than was possible here.

GRACE JULIAN CLARKE.

INDIANAPOLIS, 1909.

LOUISE VICKROY BOYD was alien to her environment and to her day.

For her setting she should have had an eighteenth century or mid-Victorian salon. She was a remarkable, virile, picturesque human manifestation. She possessed the true poetic spirit. Hers was an impassioned nature. She was swayed by subtle emotions. The loftiest sentiment found in her an instant appeal.

Anachronistic as was the combination of her masculine intellectuality with her thorough-going femininity, this was not, altogether, the cause of the misunderstanding that frequently attended her, which was more to be attributed to her native cosmopolitanism and catholicity among the insular. A cross upon which she was, more or less consciously, daily crucified.

A delightful menage, however, was that of Dr. and Mrs. Boyd, in Dublin. One of brimming hospitality and much good talk, for Dr. Boyd's geniality and fine literary sense, his love of nature and humorously whimsical outlook, admirably complemented Mrs. Boyd's poetic gifts, her erudition constantly in evidence, and her forceful and erratic utterances.

For with this fascinating lady there were no compromises. No half-lights. It was either the full glare of the electric light or the deepest darkness of the shadow. And it gave a piquancy to her society to the very last.

And in this home, as Mrs. Clarke says, were entertained many celebrities of their day.

One of the earliest exponents of "votes for women," as the modern phrase puts it, she was identified with the leaders of the "suffrage movement" conspicuous in her prime, Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell, editors of *The Woman's Journal*, the pioneer woman's paper of this country, with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. An advocate of many of the broadest tenets of Socialism, she had a long and intimate correspondence with William Morris, who sent her his autographed photograph.

One of the best known of the literati of the middle west, Mrs. Boyd's product, both before and after her marriage, appeared in

the leading journals and periodicals and was included in the most discriminating of the poetic anthologies. She was one of the founders of the Western Association of Writers, an organization of writers and artists which met yearly, although, later, she disavowed all connection with this body because of some distasteful action on the part of its officialdom which did not meet with her fastidious reservations in matters of literary import. But her friendship with many of the best known authors of this section was one of the facts that marked her career at this period.

James Whitcomb Riley, who counted Mrs. Boyd among the first to give his genius recognition, and who held Mrs. Boyd in high esteem both as a poet and friend, once wrote, under date of June 29, 1883—

“DEAR FRIEND—I have just seen your poem, ‘The Dear Old Woods,’ on a proof-slip on the editor’s desk this hour before going to press, and I have not read, for a long time, a poem that has given me such real pleasure. I think it very exquisite and graceful, beautifully sweet and tender, and I want to thank you for the rare delight it has given me.”

This was written on a card from the office of the old *Indianapolis Journal* in which many of Mrs. Boyd’s best poems appeared and which also printed much of Mr. Riley’s early verse, the *Journal* office being one of the poet’s haunts.

Mrs. Boyd’s poetic talents were versatile. While primarily lyrical in treatment, she was fond of taking her themes or subjects from history and legend and many of her poems owed their origin to the Bible.

Not alone in her attitude toward the great social movements just named, to whose adherence at that time it took much high-born courage, but in her prescience toward the more advanced ethical thought of her later years, was Mrs. Boyd attuned, instanced by “Still Small Voices,” in which she anticipated an ultra-modern cult.

In “The Legend of a Picture,” also, may be found that very pronouncement made by Mr. George Bernard Shaw to the effect that the artist batters off his loves to their final mental, as well as physical, undoing, that he may, vampire-like, turn their passion for him into the perfection of his artistic product.

In "Crossing the Delaware," this country has one of its finest historical poems, its pictorial effect being vivid and its diction musical, and "Braddock's Defeat" abounds in dramatic feeling.

Notwithstanding an almost provincial loyalty to her church and to its orthodox faith, the keynote of Mrs. Boyd's philosophy is to be found in "Oblivion," some verses published a few weeks before her death in the *Indianapolis Star*, whose note is the fateful one of all lofty souls.

From the more technical standpoint, Mrs. Boyd excelled in poetic forms, being given to effective alliteration, having great power of imagery, impinging her fleeting moods on paper melodiously, being a lover of nature and a romanticist.

✓ Of the facts of her life it is interesting to know that she was born in Urbana, Ohio, on January 2, 1827; that her name was Louise Esther Vickroy; that she was the third of a family of thirteen children; that her father was a native of Bedford County, Pennsylvania, and her mother of Warren County, Ohio; that her family became residents of Johnstown, in the latter State; that her home education was supplemented by studies in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Philadelphia, she having been, at one time in the latter city, a member of the household of the author and editor, T. S. Arthur; that she married Dr. S. S. Boyd in September, 1865, and went with him to his home in Dublin, Indiana; that after her husband's death, she remained for a while in Dublin and then went to Philadelphia where she remained several years with a married niece; that she returned to Indiana and, until the time of her death, lived with her stepson, Dr. Horace Boyd, in Cambridge City.

✓ She died July 25, 1909, in the home of her favorite sister, Mrs. Mary H. West, in Ada, Ohio, where she was a guest. She is buried at Dublin.

"E. A. Vickroy and his wife," writes a kinswoman of Mrs. Boyd, relative to Mrs. Boyd's parents, "were both people of culture, well educated and of good old-world stock in which the mixture of English, Irish, Welch and Dutch blood added their quota toward making a cosmopolitan of a mountain child. Her father was an honest man, too generous to acquire wealth, but he left his children a better inheritance — a poetic temperament and an honest name.

"When quite young, Louise began to contribute poems to the magazines, not so numerous then as now, among those in which her writings appeared being *Graham's Magazine*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Arthur's Home Magazine*, the *Little Pilgrim*, *Appleton's Journal*, and the *Knickerbocker*. Later years found her verse in the *Century*, *Scribner's*, *Country Life in America*, *Wide Awake*, *Harper's Young People*, and *The Woman's Journal*, besides many newspapers and church publications."

This volume does not contain all of Mrs. Boyd's literary product, either that published or that which had never been submitted for publication. But is limited to those poems which she herself regarded as the apogee of her poetic output and which she selected for inclusion in this book.

In as many instances as possible, the editor has indicated the place of their production and that in which they were later published, but was unable to make the bibliography a full one on account of the incomplete nature of the available material.

That the writer had known Mrs. Boyd since childhood and was honored by this gifted woman's friendship, she regards as one of the charms and distinctions of her life. In editing this volume, at the request of the author, she has endeavored to put out a book which, in format, will enhance the poet's literary reputation, but above all, one which will be indicative of the scope of Mrs. Boyd's genius and which will convey to that portion of the public which it reaches, some conception of a gifted personality.

ESTHER GRIFFIN WHITE.

RICHMOND, INDIANA,
September, 1911.

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Poems by Louise Vickroy Boyd

POEMS

BY

MRS. LOUISE VICKROY BOYD



THE SHADOW OF A ROSE

A ROYAL rose of crimson dye
Flashed splendor toward a splendid sky,
Bathed was its whole circumference
With Beauty's blessed influence.
I gazed, forgetting shadows were,
Or bitter sorrows anywhere.
A sense of June's rejoicing pride
Thrilled through my spirit, and I cried:
"Oh, Rose, wherever thou dost burst
To bloom, the dreams that Eden nursed
Are dreamed again, and Destiny
Is kind to all things near to thee!"

Ah, narrow thought! but could I know
That where its shadow slept below,
An insect fair, a tiny thing
With sheeny shard and gauzy wing,
Had crept out on a leaf to see
The world where it had come to be
A dweller for a few brief hours?
A home of sunshine, fragrance, flowers
It sought, the leaf world seemed not so;
'Twas dim, and dull, and cold below
The royal rose; the gauze and gold
Attired, was piteous to behold
So cheerless seemed her world, so wide.
She strove, grew weary, struggled, died.
Would it have cheered her at the last
To know a Rose that shadow cast?

THE DEAR OLD WOODS

A STRIP of woodland in a mountain glen
Holds in my heart a holy place away;
I come from it when I awake at night,
I wander there in many a dream by day.

I know the secret that its hawthorn keeps,
I know the sorrow thrilling through its pine,
The voiceless visions of its violets,
The joy in all its buttercups ashine.

In the olden times those beamy buttercups
Were purest gold, the coinage of the sun—
Their mother country—and I knew of them
Legends more sweet than poet ever spun.

In the old times like mimis meteors
The sunbeam shuttles, through the leafy looms
Of beech and maple, wove most wondrous webs,
In figures fashioned out of lights and glooms;

Wove glory-blazoned banners, flaunting far,
And netted hangings for the misty doors
Leading to Elfland; fabricated then
Strange phantom carpets, for strange fairy floors.

Of the old woods the music echoes still,
Deep in my heart, and not one tone has died;
The red-bird's carol, and the robin's song,
The cricket's chirp, along the streamlet side,

I hear them yet—I hear the breezes, too,
Murmur and murmur endless melody
About the far-off stars, and other lands,
And streams unmeasured running to the sea.

Over that lovely scene the loving sky
Bends, as of yore, and blossom odors go,
On viewless wings, abroad, and fair ferns bend
Where dusky, shadow-sheltered mosses grow.

Forever green, forever beautiful,
Among the mist-wreathed mountains, far away,
The old wood lies, and seems like holy ground
To one who dreams of it by night and day.

A WINTER TWILIGHT

OH, THE wearisome winter twilight!"
I said it with a sigh,
Leaning alone in the evening,
My cottage casement by.

Then, I turned me from fireside comforts,
Walking a little way
Through the gateway and down the orchard
(There was no wind at play).

And my sorrowful mood subsiding,
My spirit felt the spell
Of the fairest of summer twilights
Was part of this as well.

And I saw strange clouds in the southward
Like phantom hills uprise,
While Venus a blaze of beauty,
Brightened the western skies.

Here, the snow with its white enchantment
Had hushed the pine tree's moan,
There, the fair moon said by her smiling
She loved to be alone.

Down the streamlet, by ice bridged over
I heard the waters go,
Soft singing a song of the summer
And summer sunshine's glow.

Oh! those half-hushed, musical murmurs,
Nearer silence than sound,
Blended my hopes and my memories
Into a peace profound.

And I came again to my fireside
Happy as I could be,
And nothing on earth seemed lovelier
Than twilight-tide to me.

AN AUTUMN PICTURE

A WILD bee softly singing to itself
A lonesome-sounding dreaming little tune,
All about sunshine squandered hours ago
And flowers fading half a day too soon.

A leaden cloud, its ghostly arms outspread,
With frantic gesture striving, but in vain,
To clasp a pine tree on a mountain hight,
Yet passing by — no more to come again.

A streamlet fretting in an undertone
Because its waters leave it for the sea,
A sad wind sending shudders through the fern,
A dove that moans of nameless misery.

A sunset, seeming earlier than its wont,
With deeper shadows darkening in the dell,
Pale gentians growing paler momentarily,
And Love's fond accents faltering "Farewell."

TO THE BLOOM OF THE INDIAN TURNIP

OH, WONDER of my childhood, still as dear
As when I saw thee first in woodlands old,
Where the dark pines made gloom, and waters cold
Danced from the mountains down, the while mine ear
Drank their wild music, that to me did seem
Brought out of Fairyland, and thou the while
A very priest of Fantasy did'st smile,
Jack in the pulpit! while, as in a dream,
I waited for thy sermon, half afraid
To hear thee speak, as through the forest shade
A drowsy wind came sighing, silence then
Grew full of eloquence, and mem'ry still
Reads in thy bloom the lore of rock and hill,
And hears the voices of my native glen.

MY FOUR-O'CLOCK

SEE my four-o'clock in blossom;
Ah! to me its bloom has brought
A new thought I never dreamed of,
An old dream scarce worth a thought.

But the thought and dream together
Make the cares of life seem less,
Thinking, dreaming, dreaming, thinking,
Lost in happy idleness.

I behold the evening shadows,
Lengthening, fall about my feet,
While my way winds on through flowers,
Childhood's flowers fair and sweet.

INTERALIA

THERE'S a spot in the dear old woodland,
I know the place so well,
Where the brightest sunbeams gleam and glide,
And the dreamiest shadows dwell.

There a boisterous, mad little brook,
And a laughter-voiced water-fall,
Leap towards a spring — deep, clear, and cool
The sweetest treasure of all.

There's a still pond near, where lilies,
And a nook where violets grow,
And a bank of the wavering witchery
Of the wind-flower's phantom snow.

But the child with tresses like silken gold,
That wandered there with me,
That I garlanded with flowers, and said,
My fairy queen was she —

She, the child with sea-blue eyes,
Comes never any more —
Faint gleams her smile on memory's waste,
As some far, fairy shore.

Oh, the memory-pictured woodland,
The dear, dream-enchanted dell,
Like a saintly picture glorified
Smiles on me "All is well!"

Bloom, flowers, bloom on, in that sweet spot,
Laugh, waves, in merriest tone,
But I must seek ye nevermore,
I could not go alone.

But mortal flowers ye never saw,
Sweet waves ye know not of,
Her holier smile that waits for me
In the dear Land of Love.

THE VOICE OF THE WIND

I.

THE sweet-voiced wind of Spring awoke
The violet from her winter dream,
And something in its music set
The dandelion's gold agleam.

II.

The Summer wind went, laughing low,
Across the land, across the sea,
Touched here the flowers and there the sails,
And turned Life's fairest page for me.

III.

The Autumn wind in triumph sang
Of purple grapes and royal wine,
But killed the flowers and wrecked the ship,
And broke the Summer's heart and mine.

IV.

Hark now the lonesome Winter wind,
How over weary wastes of snow
It moans and wails and shrieks aloud
Some unintelligible woe.

TO A GERANIUM

THOU wert a common weed-like plant, they say,
Half choked with dust beside a rugged way
Where good Mahomet passed one sunny day.

His robes but lightly touched thee and behold!
Thy leaves grew satin-soft and edged with gold,
And every green bud hastened to unfold.

A dainty petaled blossom glowing fair
With a new-born, strange gladness, and the air
From thy rich foliage breathed a fragrance rare.

Ah! well in Turkish gardens far away,
Where soft winds pass and crystal fountains play,
May raptured glances greet thy bloom today.

Thine is a lovely legend, and I deem
Thee worthy of the setting as the theme
Of some forgotten Moslem poet's dream.

THE LINGERING SUMMER

OH, SAY not it is autumn !
 I know 'tis summer still.
 What if the leaves have fallen,
 And yesterday was chill?

See, roses are around me,
 So fresh and bright and sweet,
 And softest sunshine brightens
 The verdure at my feet.

'Tis summer, lovely summer ;
 She bade good-by, but then,
 Seeing our tears, repented,
 And turned to us again.

Turned to give us another
 Fond blessing and good-by,
 With comforting caresses,
 To bid us not to cry.

And, thinking we could bear it,
 Ready to go she seemed
 Another time ; we grieved so
 That back her sunlight streamed,

And she sent a rain like April's
 To bring these flowers out,
 Her southward winds and westward
 Both kindly turned about

To whisper, "It is summer ;"
 So don't you, don't you say
 'Tis autumn now ; I tell you
 This is a summer day !

How true she is I never,
 No, never knew before,
 When she beholds our sorrow,
 To linger one day more.

But even while I praise her,
 There falls a shadow dread
Across the world; my summer,
 Alas! is summer dead.

And now her own bright roses
 I strew upon her bier,
And when they die to-morrow,
 Then autumn will be here.

PAGES

I.

THEY strayed adown the dewy dell,
One spring-time day with footsteps free.
The daisy's disc, the lily's bell,
The sighing reed, the humming bee
Set each young heart with joy aglow,
While all the birds were singing so.

II.

They wandered in the garden bowers
When summer skies were softly blue,
And saw the fountain's silver showers,
And life was fair, and love was true;
While rapture's tale was whispered low
Among the roses blushing so.

III.

They parted on a lonely hill,
Under a pallid waning moon,
And often said "Farewell," but still
Lingered to speak of meeting soon —
The autumn winds were wailing low
And faded leaves were falling so.

IV.

At last, one wintry eventide,
A lover stood, and stood alone,
Watching the west, where day had died
From the dim sky; with weary moan
He wept above, she slept below,
Where all the snow-flakes drifted so.

AFTER THE CYCLONE

IS THIS the spot? they tell me so,
Where my home stood a week ago.
One little week ago, ah me!
My weary gaze can only see
An orchard of uprooted trees,
A garden swept away, and these
Great heaps of logs and clay that press
The earth with their unsightliness.
They made the cottage low, where we,
Myself and John and baby, three
At least, of all earth's children were
Most glad of life, most free from care.

The morning, oh, it was so bright!
And clover blossoms red and white
Made the air heavy with perfume,
And early roses were in bloom;
The climbing peas in bud and beets
In red-lined leaves telling their sweets.
The beans grew fast, the cabbage, too,
Its sea-green leaves empearled with dew
Stood sturdily; and from my door
I saw it all and wondered more
And more — my baby on my knee —
Why God had been so good to me.

Then John came whistling from the field;
John was my life, my sun, my shield,
And as he came, my heart so blest
With olden memories tenderest,
Seemed overburdened just to see
Him come, and see the baby's glee.
He talked with me a little while,
Drank from the well, then with a smile
Lifted the baby up, and said:
"Good-bye;" and laid upon my head
His hand with a tender touch, and then
Said: "We will not come back again;
My work is done, and now, you see,
The baby goes along with me."

I laughed aloud, with scarcely less
Than my own baby's carelessness,
Under the trees and through the gate
Went man and child with joy elate.
The father with such fond, fond pride
To give the little one a ride
On horseback there; I looked that way
And waved my hand as glad as they.
And this, and this; who tells me so,
That it was but a week ago?

Then I was young; now I am old,
As though my threescore years were told;
My memory tries in vain to go
Through what befell, but this I know,
An awful sound from everywhere
And sudden horror filled the air.
Swaying and sweeping overhead
A spectral cloud so dark and dread
Came through the sky, and Heaven fell,
And earth sank down, and up rose Hell,
And I was lost, and called on John
To bring our child, but died alone.

I died, for it was death to me,
And that one hour eternity.
And now, God pity me, I stand
Upon this desolated land,
Home, garden, flowers and trees are gone,
I have no hope, no child, no John.
The neighbors tell me God knows best,
To comfort me, they are at rest,
They say, and buried tenderly
When I was all too ill to see.
It must be so, it must be so,
But was it but a week ago?

Would I could know how long it seems
To John and baby in their dreams,
For well I know they dream of me,
Who loved them, oh, so utterly!
Ah! they have much to tell, how they
Cried out for me in death that day.

John standing on the Happy Shore
Without my welcome at the door,
He cannot be at home, and he
Will grieve because he said to me
They would not come again ; then make
More of the baby for my sake.

Oh, there be secrets dark and deep
The dead must know, the dead must keep,
And there be sorrows all too dread
To tell the living, but the dead
We long to tell, they heed us not,
Oh, John and baby, unforget!
I stand an effigy of woe
Where our home stood a week ago.

THE TULIP TREE

POETS have sung in every tongue,
 The oak tree's majesty and might,
 And oriental minstrels aye
 Chant of the palm with fond delight,
 But I will speak in praise of thee,
 O tulip tree, my tulip tree!

How often in the forest green
 I've marked thy stately shaft uprise,
 And seen thee lift with matchless grace,
 Thy crown of flowers toward the skies,
 How golden green, and red, and white,
 Those cups o'erflowed with Heaven's own light,
 Our country's flag is scarce more bright.

Ah! where the young trees stood along
 The fence rows of my native glen,
 I used to go at early morn,
 Startling the robin and the wren
 From bloom cups tasting, for I knew
 The secret of their honey dew.

Oh! fair and gay the olives wave
 Amid the words of Solomon,
 While cedars crown with deathless green
 The lofty brow of Lebanon.
 But oh! the wisest Hebrew's woods,
 They wave so far away from me;
 My tulip tree, and in thy shade
 I've thought with sorrowing sympathy,
 Of every prophet, every king,
 That never saw thy blossoming.

Our Lowell grew inspired below
 A birch's wavering witchery;
 Longfellow dreamed his youth's best dream
 Under a spreading chestnut tree;
 Why did they pass thy beauty by
 Nor give thee immortality?

The birds, the winds, the waterfall,
All voices of my infancy,
Sang to me through the summer sky,
An anthem to the tulip tree ;
The song is in my soul, but still
To give it voice, I have no skill.

While England keeps for emblem flower,
Or red, or white, the royal rose,
And Scotland's purple thistle sheds
Sweet breath on every wind that blows,
And Erin still delights to call
The three-leaved shamrock best of all,

While France may claim the fleur-de-lis
And violet her own for aye,
I will not envy one of them,
Because if I could have my way,
My country's emblem flower should be
The blossom of the tulip tree.

SUMMER TIME

UNDER the palm trees she dwelleth,
The beautiful summer time,
Then sitteth wrapt in sweet reverie,
Of an olden, golden clime.

Under the sunshine the live-long day
And under the starlit skies,
Silent she sitteth and holdeth fast
Her mythical memories.

Above white clouds go sailing,
And the palm plumes wave below,
While the pyramids in silence watch
The Nile's majestic flow.

But under the palms where she dwelleth,
There wandereth once a year,
A breeze from the North with a breath of the pine,
And a voice that calleth her here.

Then the summer time all radiant,
And garlanded with flowers,
Her lap filled with cherries and strawberries,
Glides into these homes of ours.

And we greet her with words warm hearted,
She knows we are glad in her smile,
But soon she is lost in sweet reverie,
'Neath her palms by the slumberous Nile.

THE RAINBOW

" 'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there,
 All the wild flowers of the forest,
 All the lilies of the prairie,
 When on earth they fade and perish,
 Blossom in the heaven above us."
 —*Hiawatha*.

'TIS the sweet belief of the Indian child,
 That above this world of ours,
 The rainbow, gleaming in colors soft,
 Is the heaven of the flowers.

That never a lily is broken here,
 A rose's leaflets shed,
 Or a lowly violet rudely crushed,
 But it blooms again o'erhead.

The snowy bells that the hunter brought,
 To wreath in the maiden's hair,
 The buds that died with the confined child,
 Alike they are blooming there.

Oh, holiest faith, that the very flowers
 Have a spirit that cannot die;
 But will rise again with a brighter glow,
 To smile on us from the sky.

Ah, 'twere sweet to know that the faded bloom
 Of our by-gone happy years,
 With the mist and the sunshine blending soft,
 Of remembered smiles and tears,

Freshened and pure, from a holy heaven,
 Sometimes in our sky would gleam,
 And promise a Future of flowers — aye, tinged
 With the light of some early dream.

ONLY A LEAF

ONLY a leaf, but it grew for me
 At the homestead old by the gateway tree;
 Through lovely springtime and summer fair,
 Lightly it waved in the mountain air;
 And when Autumn came like a misty dream,
 Soft purpling over each hill and stream,
 O'er this fragile leaf swept a passion spell
 Where a wordless story is pictured well.
 Rich veined and spotted with gold so bright,
 And its tips illumined with crimson light;
 Apollo's signal in dot and line,
 And bearing the Frost King's countersign.

But its tale is not of the fields of blue,
 That the fair and far-off stars look through
 From a region of blessedness and bliss,
 Fulfilling the happiest hopes of this
 The story for me leads through memory ways
 And the shadows of long-gone yesterdays.
 And sweet is the thought that the grief of then
 May never approach my heart again,
 And I smile serenely to find the truth,
 That in place of the vanishing visions of youth
 The joys of life's autumn have come to be
 Like the picture fair on the leaf I see
 Where the flush of the springtime that passed away,
 The glow of the summer that would not stay
 Shine peerless now they were but delayed
 Till the fitting page should be ready made
 And springtime's blossoms and summer's green
 Be overmatched by the autumn sheen.

My life ere I reach the Infinite Shore
 Is a fluttering leaf nor less nor more,
 But something at last, for there impressed
 It keeps what of all it has found the best:
 For Joy has left traces as pure gold bright
 And Faith shows the streakings of morning light
 Like a leaflet fragile traced line by line
 Waiting the Death Angel's countersign.

A FROST-PICTURED WINDOW

FLED and gone is the royal summer,
Vanished the vision of flowers fair;
Sails no butterfly down the meadow,
Floats no song on the sunny air.

Now, in winter, my chamber window
Shows a picture in frosted gleams,
Fern and fountain and fairy forest,—
Just the land where I go in dreams.

Stately ships over seas of silver
Lightly glide to a sheeny shore,
Where uprises a wondrous city,
Festal garlands on every door.

Through this window for weeks together
Summer's glory was grand to see,
But this picture, so fair and fleeting,
Let me whisper, is more to me.

A SUNSET PICTURE

O H, THE clouds to-night,
 In the sunset's light,
 Make a lovely picture for me!
 Of a stretch of sand,
 And a castle grand,
 By a blue, transparent sea.

No tale of romance,
 Of pennon and lance,
 Of Christian and Pynim slain,
 Seemed ever to be,
 More vivid to me,
 Than this, nor castle in Spain,

Nor castle in air,
 Seemed ever so fair
 A picture to spread for my eye;
 But something reflected,
 Not unexpected—
 'Twas painted there in the sky.

In that castle grim
 And gloomy and dim,
 There seems nor revel nor song;
 Sure the gateways old,
 And the chambers cold,
 To a darker age belong.

Ah! with sudden start,
 And chill at my heart,
 I see where the toiling tide
 Creeps cruel and slow,
 As in half-hushed woe—
 Can it be?—a white-robed bride!

No; the maiden fair
 That is lying there,
 I am sure she is a nun,
 Who, bidding farewell
 To the convent cell,
 When the vesper hymn was done,

Had ventured to float
In an oarless boat,
 Whither — ah! she might not guess —
But, yearning for love,
All treasures above,
 Flying alone from loneliness.

But the boat, yon speck,
Was a total wreck,
 And the fair form on the shore,
Close under the tall
Grey old castle wall,
 Her brief, lone voyage o'er,

With the cross close pressed
To her cold, white breast,
 Her beautiful hair unbound,
She lieth at rest
By the gates of the West,
 Her corpse but for me unbound.

Now, upward at last
The picture has passed,
 By the sunset to me given;
I could almost weep,
Yet the thought I keep,
 My nun — she is safe in Heaven.

SHADOWS

A DREAM of shadows, a shadowy dream,
 Floats to my soul from some far-off shore,
 And hours whose record the world has lost,
 Have resurrection in time once more.

I see the daughter of Cenci's House,
 Rosy, radiant in girlhood's glee,
 And the breath of the flowers she dallies with,
 Sweet to faintness floats over me.

Entranced, I listen to Sappho's song,
 Ere Sappho's bosom knew how to sigh,
 Where silvery moonbeams kiss the shore,
 The sea-waves dance in joyance by.

And, in a bower with blossoms bright,
 A child, old Egypt's Queen, at rest
 I see, and she starts if a butterfly
 With its silken wing brushes her breast.

* * * * *

O Beatrice! the dream recedes,
 And thy fate with its horrors dread will rise,
 With thy beautiful face so dear to Art,
 And the poet's dream of thine agonies.

The vision fades, and the Queen of the Nile
 Shrinks not away from the serpent's sting,
 While Sappho, ere closing her last love lay,
 Takes from the sea-cliff the fatal spring.

Ah! dreary and cold is this winter day,
 And the world of the present has many an ill,
 And musing, I marvel and question why
 Must the griefs of the old world grieve us still?

* * * * *

Sweet dream of shadows, shadowy dream!
 Come back, come back to my spirit's ken!
 So those bright hours oblivion claims
 For me may arise in time again.

WHY?

SOFTLY the summer sunlight streams
In through the cottage door,
Till a goldenly beautiful vision grows
Betwixt the rafters and floor.
But the sorrowless maiden standing there,
With the gleam of the sunshine's gold on her hair,
Singeth, to pass away the time,
Of glooms and shadows a sorrowful rhyme.

Where a gray-haired, weary woman walks
Alone o'er a moorland plain,
While the winds around her with sighs, and sobs,
Of the murky skies complain;
Wonderful castles uprise in the air
So sunshine tinged, so rainbow fair,
Nor sighs are breathed, nor tears will start,
O'er the heaps of ruins that crush her heart.

THE LOST HOPE

I.

IT IS lost, the sweet hope that was mine, till it taught me
 To believe that it formed of my being a part;
 Till my cheek could but glow, and my eye but take lustre
 From the flame it had lit on the hearth of the heart.

II.

'Twas my sun through the day and the star of my night-time;
 But alas! when I knew not it suddenly fled,
 And its light is no longer a crown for the living,
 And, oh! bitterer sorrow! 'tis not with the dead.

III.

Oh! no; had it died with the voice of a loved one,
 Or chilled with some brow in the grave's gloomy prison,
 Some angel of light by the sepulchre door-way
 Might kindly point upward and say, "It is risen."

IV.

But now, in the brightness and glory of noon-day
 I but feel that some shadow my spirit has crossed,
 And at midnight, from dreams of the hope that once cheered me
 I awake with the cry on my lips: "It is lost!"

V.

Though sometimes, even yet, to my desolate bosom
 Its memory, a phantom-like wandering ray,
 Comes, sweet as a flower-scent borne by the breezes,
 And soft as an echo just dying away;

VI.

Yet 'tis lost, and more sad than the star-sisters' grieving
 When a Pleiad was missed from the heavenly host,
 Is each sister hope's sigh, by despair over-shadowed,
 Since I say of the bright one, "'Tis lost! it is lost!"

ROMANCE

OH, TELL me not Romance is dead!
He lives, as live the songs he sung
Of gallants gay and ladies fair,
When this poor world of ours was young.

Nor grows he old, who findeth rest
And vigor in enchanted dells,
Where mystic fountains leap to life,
And Poesie eternal dwells.

Immortal gods their blessings shed
Upon his birth, and every shore
Of every land has welcomed him,
And prayed him to depart no more.

And Time and Tide have stayed for him
Some holy mission to complete,
Proud History followed where he led,
Death wore a smile his smile to meet.

Believing eyes behold him yet
From Youth's fair summits far away,
Subduing all the sunny realms
That never crumble to decay.

In nightly guise his faithful steed
He urges toward ancestral halls,
Through misty greenwoods lilting low
Of Love and Hope sweet madrigals.

Where on his sleeve his lady's hand
Hath wrought a golden rose abloom,
The starlight shimmers, while the winds
Rejoice to kiss his nodding plume.

Sometimes he hears from leafy bowers
The harps the elfin people tune,
Or wins the smile of fairy folk
That flit betwixt him and the moon.

He still is loyal to the Right
As he is true to Truth, we know,
And strong his arm and keen his blade
When overtaking Virtue's foe.

And, sweet Romance! to lovers true
The tender glamor of his rays
Makes this, the present time, as fair
As his divinest yesterdays.

A CITY

THEN

A CITY enthroned by the waters,
Rejoicing in conscious power
To see in the tide reflected
Her palace and temple and tower.
The heavens behold with smiling
How regal her splendor is,
And winds of her wealth are telling
In measureless harmonies.

NOW

The city is lost in a legend,
But the legend tells us she
Was invaded and overpowered
By a wild, insurgent sea,
While winds are weary wailing
A requiem evermore,
Where her glory's ghost unquiet
Is haunting a lonely shore.

TO-DAY

TO-DAY from early morn was fair,
With pearly spray and golden sky,
Its gladsome sights, its happy sounds,
I saw and heard, why did I sigh?
Because each passing hour to me
Persistent in reproach would say,
From whispering breeze and nodding flower,
What did you do with yesterday?

Oh, fair to-day, though fading, fair
As manhood's hope or woman's dream,
When ere the sunset's glory wanes
We hail the moon's more tender beam.
From noon till night I look abroad,
But joy not in the joys I see,
Because of questioning hour by hour,
What will to-morrow do with me?

THE AFTERNOON

SIT down, good housewife, sit down and rest
All through the shadowy afternoon,
The work of the morning and noontime is done,
Rest, for the eventide cometh soon.

The housewife answered, "It cannot be,
Though all my home seems in order set,
There's a duty here, and a duty there —
Many a thing I must see to yet;

For girls are careless, and might not think
To brew the yeast for the morrow's bread,
To skim the cream, and to turn the cheese,
Or to air the sheets for the stranger's bed."

Weary farmer, sit here where the shade
Is sweet as a soft sundown in June;
Turn away from the burden and heat
To the grateful rest of the afternoon.

The farmer answered, "It would not do;
The boys are good, but they lack the thought
To look to this and to see to that,
And prepare for the morning as they ought;

To take the plow to a distant field,
The tree to prop, and the gate to mend,
To see that the horse is saddled and shod
To send to the station for a friend."

The words of the housewife, the farmer's words,
They brought to my eyes the sudden tears,
Each working away in field and house,
Where each had labored so many years.

We mean it kindly to ask of them
To take their rest in the afternoon;
But, ah! they would rather work on till night —
The night that cometh for them so soon.

Oh! sturdy youth, 'tis your father's right
To keep his place as in days of old;
With mother beside you, maiden dear,
Life's sweetest chapter is being told.

We are growing old, aye, growing old,
Fathers and mothers, but after all
The world has need of the work we do,
And our presence on to evenfall.

And we've still an effort more to make
In the light of the golden afternoon,
For a coming night, a certain guest,
And glorious morrow to follow soon.

THE LOVER

ALL hail, the beloved lover,
For who is so blest as he!
The wonder-world of his future
Such a vision of victory.

He walks like the man first fashioned
In a happy garden's aisles,
And scorneth the thought of sorrow,
In the light of the loved one's smiles.

Wherever a father and mother
Stand amid children fair,
We see his triumph recorded,
For once the lover was there.

And though ever so old the story,
Like some traditional rhyme,
It groweth more sweet in the reading
When read for the hundredth time.

Full soon o'er the little folk playing
Under unshadowed skies,
As sure as the hours are fleeting
Will the lover's star arise;

And be he a prince or peasant,
With jeweled or gilded ring,
To place on the dear one's finger,
'Tis the lover out-kings the king.

AN ARAB'S STORY

WE JOURNEYED where a desert stretched
 In leagues of loneliness away,
 And from the burning sky above
 Fell shadowlessly, day by day,
 That spell upon our Caravan,
 So softly, strangely Asian,
 That made the fairest memory seem
 The fading memory of a dream.

Pilgrims of pleasure wandered we,
 And where we scarcely cared to ken,
 But for the Orient traveler's joys
 We joined us to her merchant men;
 Believing all the ¹bashé said,
 And following where the ²hybeer led—
 Our moving and our resting time
 The measures of a moody rhyme.

And as the stately camels stepped
 In silence 'mid the solemn scene,
 Our present moments seemed no more,
 The past and future placed between;
 But we had lived eternities
 Whose moments all were like to these,
 Passively trusting Fate to show
 The distance and the way to go.

What time the sunset round us made
 The splendor of a saffron sea,
 And silence on the rosy air
 Seemed silence born of mystery—
 A voiceless something to us told
 Of wonder-winged enchantments old,
 By grey Tradition long forgot,
 Brooding o'er many a desert spot.

NOTES.—¹Bashé. General Superintendent of a Caravan.
²Hybeer. The Guide.

Then looking longingly above —
 Feeling from heaven forlornly far —
 We saw upon her azure path
 Still pacing slow, each golden star;
 And would have looked through tears, but soon
 Uprose for us the fair faced moon,
 And one child's laughter, ringing clear,
 Proclaimed earth still the Happy Sphere.

Now would I pause and watch as then —
 Each moment's interest more intense —
 Our tents pitched with that mixture strange
 Of majesty and turbulence,
 Where chiefs command, and slaves obey,
 Mild camels kneel, vexed asses bray,
 And over-wearied folk express
 Their sense of rest in restlessness.

Aye let me keep those long past hours,
 And would one careless memory flit
 Into oblivion, wake my heart
 With eager haste, and capture it.
 I must have all; it was so sweet
 To watch the dancers' agile feet,
 Weave hints of woe and glints of glee
 In one monotonous fantasy.

And passing rich the moonlight seemed
 While listening and ne'er too long,
 When Arab lips these fables sweet
 Murmured in tales or set to song.
 "The rosebud loved the butterfly
 Vainly, and so but bloomed to die."
 "The palm would make the breeze his own,
 She fled from him with mocking tone."

One turbaned greybeard had the power,
 With his weird face of somber hue,
 And voice of music oft to bring
 A world of passion to our view,
 Where Valor dared, and Beauty wept,
 And Worldly Wisdom never slept,
 From this prime center ever moved,
 "Noureddin reasoned, Selim loved."

One evening's tale — my heart's deep well,
 Keeps still each drop of honeyed bliss
 It gathered in that listening trance —
 Seemed over-sweet, its preface this:
 "O Franks! this tale more true than old,
 Was written by a scribe, who told
 Scarcely of things less holy-wise
 Than spirits known in Paradise.

"My lips grow pale that they should be
 Moved to rehearse these wondrous things;
 My spirit bows itself, o'er swept
 By a great angel's shadowing wings.
 For God is God! and even night
 May in his smile be filled with light,
 A living light that man may see,
 And shape by it his destiny.

"Where ³Tigris and Euphrates flow,
 Rivers that once washed Eden's hem,
 There dwelt three kings, three gentle kings,
 And shepherd folk were ruled by them.
 The land in worship bent the knee
 Through darkening idolatry,
 But these wise Rulers each had brought
 From childhood's days one holy thought.

"Kindled at Faith's pure altar flame,
 How that the High and Holy One
 Would yet give earth her kingliest king,
 For thus the ancient legends run,
 'Mid Error's deepening glooms there stood
 Three sisters blest with motherhood,
 Bathed in more bright prophetic gleams
 Than struggle through the door of dreams.

³Tigris and Euphrates. As to the country from which the Wise Men came, opinions vary greatly; but their following the guidance of a star seems to point to the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, where Astronomy was early cultivated by the Chaldeans. The religion of Zoroaster remaining pure from the grosser forms of idolatry preserved the hope of a great deliverer, who should reform the world, and establish a reign of universal peace. That some tradition, influenced possibly by the Jews of the dispersion, went so far as to make this deliverer a king of the Jews, seems a fair inference from their direct form of inquiry for him. Need it be said that in the traditions of the East these wise men are always regarded as kings?

“The mothers of these boy-kings they,
 And oft beneath Chaldean skies
 They pictured worlds of Truth more bright
 Than the star-gazer’s ecstasies
 Had summoned, when the reedy lyre
 He clasped, and words with sacred fire
 Alive, and full of excellence,
 Throbbled into songs of joy intense.

“True mother lips drop words of pearl—
 God’s ear leans low toward mother-prayer;
 These mothers breathed o’er their sweet sons,
 In mingled rapture and despair,
 ‘O God! may these our sons be Thine,
 Thy smile of mercy on them shine,
 Make their dust-fettered spirits still,
 Lean upon Thee in every ill.’

“And to their sons, ‘O sons! be pure,’
 They said each morn and eventide,
 ‘Who made the lily and the star
 Will send his angels you to guide;
 We know from blessed ⁴Seth there came
 A promise down too sweet to name,
 That he should take, this coming king,
 From even dreaded Death the sting.’

“‘O sons! be pure, and it may be
 That even for the sake of us
 Who worship Him the world forgets,
 This sinless king, and glorious,
 May rear on earth his star-bright throne,
 Where ye his scepter’s power may own;
 Some ray may guide you to the shore
 Where He shall reign forevermore.’

“‘And ye will bring him gifts’ they said,
 ‘The best ye can, nor dare refuse,
 Though of a stranger people’s house
 His mother be. King of the Jews
 His name. Ah! once Great Solomon
 The throne of Judah sat upon.
 And then, the tale is strangely dim,
 A mighty queen gave gifts to him.’

⁴Seth. Seth is a favorite personage among the Orientals, and acts a conspicuous part in many of their most extravagant romances.

“They gathered then, these infant kings,
From pleasant plain and liliated rill,
Blooms of blood red and blooms of white,
With which the mother laps to fill.
And sweet their childish accents flow,
As with their treasures kneeling low,
They smiling say, ‘Our gifts we bring,
Oh, keep them for the wondrous king.’

“Each mother, with uplifted soul
Beheld the gift her darling brought,
And sudden tears, her eyes that dimmed,
Sprang, born of some diviner thought
Than the mere gladness for the grace
Of his fair gift— ’twas that his face
Was so by holy rapture lit,
She knew what spirit lighted it.

“But years wore on, till childhood’s isle
Lay far behind, while still they bring
To place in the dear mother hands
A yearly added offering;
E’en such as lordliest merchants sold,
Of myrrh and frankincense and gold,
Through years that came, and years that went,
The child’s hope now, the man’s intent.

“The mothers passed away, the sons
Wailingly cried, ‘Alas that we
Such smile as shone above our gifts
Of loveliest flowers no more shall see;
But mother prayers are prayers of might,
And mother precepts guide aright,
Our gold, our frankincense, our myrrh,
We’ll keep for him, through love of her.’

“At last! at last! they felt the time
Draw near, with sweet unquestioning awe,
Laid their long cherished treasures then
Upon their asses, and they saw,
And wondered, while it came from far,
Yet knew, and joyful cried, ‘The star!
The star! The star!’ as over them
It stood. Then toward Jerusalem

"They followed on. How heaven-touched,
 How conscious seemed the silence deep;
 What awful beauty in the night,
 What peace, beyond the peace of sleep!
 While fairer than the fairest dreams,
 Above them still the new star's beams
 Smoothed like a mother's soft caress
 All the unmeasured distances.

"It touched at last with softened glow
 The glory of Jerusalem,
 Where tarried they a little while,
 Then journeyed on to Bethlehem;
 For the star stayed above that small,
 Mean village, lighting up the stall
 Of a most lowly stable, where
 A virgin and her infant were.

"Their life-time's hope was crowned that hour,
 And blessed were their eyes that saw
 A mother fairer than their own;
 And oh! with what delighted awe
 Beheld an infant on her knee,
 Far, far more beautiful to see,
 Than all the dewy memoried flowers,
 They gathered in glad childhood's hours.

"They knelt, and worshiped, and they gave
 In joy their hoarded offerings,
 And wise in their simplicity,
 They hailed the child the King of Kings.
 E'en where a manger made his bed,
 And gentle kine beside him fed,
 They knew the Promised One, long sought,
 Death's victor, son of God's Best Thought.

"It was a piteous time, the land
 Was ruled by a most cruel king,
 Who infants slew, and sought to slay
 This babe, and those who dared to bring
 Homage and offerings from afar;
 But God, who led them by a star,
 Protected still their steps, and they
 Warned by a dream, fled safe away.

“O, Franks! my story strange is done;
But ah! they say, in many a land
Where sculptures are, and paintings rare,
Forevermore is seen to stand
In marble white, this mother mild,
Clasped to her breast the Holy Child,
Or painted sitting motherly,
The halo'd infant on her knee.

“And oft before her, kneeling low,
The Wise Men with their gifts are seen,
And by their bearded visages
Her beauty glows more bright I ween.
The tale you've heard. Oh! bear it far,
Linked in your memory to the star.
Or, if it please not, day by day,
With their dream let it fade away.”

The Arab's voice was hushed, and now,
In leagues of loneliness away
We saw the desert stretch, and felt
More deep the spell, that night and day,
Had fallen on our Caravan,
So sadly, strangely Asian
It made the fairest memory seem
The fading memory of a dream.

GLIMPSES

1

WHEN the angels their holiest vigils keep
 As our life lies folded in silence deep
 In the arms of Death — we call it Sleep.

2

Familiar music we often hear
 As by memory brought from some other sphere,
 Strains which we know yet have learned not here.

3

And glimpses wander the reason o'er
 Of ways where our footsteps have passed before
 In some far-off shadowy Heretofore.

4

And fair is the light where the spirit stands
 And loving the smiles of the kindred bands
 And fond caresses of gentle hands.

5

We may know not now where the region lies
 Under the arch of whose cloudless skies
 Such love looked out of such tender eyes.

6

But these glimpses show how this life of pain
 Is only a link in an endless chain,
 Like 'mid sands of the ocean one small grain.

7

And but know when we grope 'mid these shadows deep
 The secrets oblivion fain would keep,
 Almost revealed in the realm of sleep.

ONCE LOVED

“ONCE loved!” “once loved!” what mystery strange
Those little common words enfold,
For in them lurks as deep despair
As longest story ever told.

“Once loved!” “once loved!” the words recall
So much the heart would fain forget;
Bitter as brief they syllable
A tragedy of vain regret.

“Once loved!” these words have power to ope
A long-locked chamber in the breast,
Darkness, and emptiness, to show
Where had been throned a royal guest.

“Once loved!” “once loved!” the words bring back
The light it seemed like heav’n to see
Only to fade and to become
A most heart-breaking phantasy.

BRADDOCK'S DEFEAT

I.

THE noon-day sun of fierce July
Blazed over vale and wood,
Where fair Monongahela's stream
Pours down her limpid flood,
And there, in all their bright array,
The ranks of BRADDOCK stood.

II.

They could not choose but pause awhile
To gaze upon that scene:
The earth smiled in the gladsome light,
The skies were so serene,
And blazoned banners gayly danced
The waving boughs between.

III.

But midst that summer solitude,
And stillness so profound,
Full many a gallant soldier's glance
Stole cautious o'er the ground,
For well they know the wily foe
E'en now may lurk around.

IV.

But proudly beamed their leader's eye,
To mark his goodly train,
And cheerily he spake: "We go
A victory to gain;
For, by Saint GEORGE, I mean this night
To sup in Fort Du Quesne.

V.

"And seek ye not, my merry men,
An ambush or a shield,
Among the sheltering underwood;
But in the open field,
Show to the French and savage brood
A band that will not yield!"

VI.

Ah! little did he dream of what
 A moment might disclose!
 For ere his words had died away
 The deafening war-whoop rose,
 And each man saw the forest aisles
 All peopled with his foes.

VII.

Oh! dreadful was the slaughter then!
 And brave hearts quaked to see
 An avalanche of arrows shower
 From every greenwood tree,
 Blent with the horrid roar and fire
 Of French artillery.

VIII.

One moment are the English troops
 Repulsed, and backward fall:
 A moment more they rally at
 Their leader's trumpet call;
 'Tis vain, they do but see their ranks
 Soldier by soldier fall.

IX.

Tumultous and terrible
 The battle storm sweeps on,
 Till many a noble form is low
 And many a spirit gone:
 That scene the pitying angels well
 Might weep to look upon.

X.

Misguided BRADDOCK lives to see
 His ruinous defeat,
 But mortal pangs forbid him e'er
 His vaunting words repeat,
 As his few followers bear him on
 Their swift confused retreat.

XI.

Nor shrank that warrior spirit then,
To join the mighty dead,
Where naught might break the silence deep
About his lonely bed,
Save the wild wolf's or panther's cry,
Or Indian's stealthy tread.

XII.

Perchance he sighed that England's shores
He might not see again,
As faithful memory recalled
Sweet shade and sunny lane,
Loved long ago: but what were these
To the o'ermastering pain:

XIII.

That not one gleam of triumph shone
Above life's ebbing tide,
And that no victor's wreath might crown
His forehead as he died,
Hero of that disastrous day,
Martyr to his own pride?

MY PALACE

LONG since a day-dream palace
I builded in the air,
My heart with joy exulting
That naught could be more fair.
I peopled it with pleasures,
I lighted it with love,
While fears of its destruction
Were fears I knew not of.

But, just a cold word spoken
By one I loved too well,
One fond glance given another,
And lo! my palace fell.
Walls, towers, love-light, pleasures,
One heap of ruins lay.
Call not those ruins airy,
They crush my heart to-day.

A SHADOW

THE sun looks down upon me
From a blue and cloudless dome;
But a shadow, as of trouble —
If past or if to come
I know not — round me gathers,
And heavier it seems,
Because unknown to memory,
Unprophesied in dreams.

As when from lamp-lit chambers
One tries to gaze outside,
And starts to see an image
Of himself before him glide
In the border land of darkness
Beyond the window pane;
But naught is there but blackness
When he turns to look again.

This dim disturbing presence
That I cannot recognize,
By touch, or sight, or hearing,
Comes from the world that lies
Outside the mortal senses
Stealing my senses o'er.
I would that seer or sibyl
Of the awful days of yore,

Would read for me its riddle —
But they have passed away —
And I must but conjecture,
In the work world of to-day,
The message and the meaning
Of the shadow, that my heart
But knoweth is a shadow,
And but knoweth this in part.

PAST LOVE

WHAT it is, and where is it now?
The angel guest —
That dove-like came, and nestled once
Within my breast.

Does the sweet spirit wait for me
On some far shore?
Or is it numbered with the things
To be no more?

Where are the joys that vision once
Called into birth?
Gone — never more to re-illuminate
My path on earth!

Alas! that early dream of bliss
Was dearly bought;
To be, at last, but bitter food
For troubled thought.

Where is the holy spark I nursed?
From Heaven that came —
That gentlest care, and kindly hopes,
Fed into flame;

Whose steadfast glow I deemed should light
My coming years:
Darkness above its embers broods —
'Twas quenched in tears.

Ah! where are now the rapture-tones
My heart that thrilled,
Like heaven-born strains of melody
Forever stilled.

But, mournful as the sea-wave's moan
On some lone shore,
Their echoes through my soul shall ring
For evermore.

BIMINI*

THE isle enchanted, beautiful Bimini,
 'Mid the Atlantic's billows seen of old,
 Rising, floating, fading in the distance
 As oft the daring Spanish sailors told.
 Was it but a fable? Did they never
 See its glorious hills and valleys fair?
 Did they never catch its wild birds' music,
 Never breathe one moment its sweet air?

Ah, they must have seen it! Fancy never
 Painted loveliness like that fair isle's,
 There the wondrous Fount of Youth was gushing,
 There were found again Love's long lost smiles;
 Hills all clad in green-eternal glory,
 Valleys with their laps o'er full of flowers,
 West winds shaking odors from their pinions,
 South winds dreaming in the bonny bowers.

O, 'mid those sweet recesses to have wandered,
 To pluck those flowers never elsewhere found!
 O, to have clambered to those radiant highlands
 And cast one raptured, longing look around!
 O, to have met the beautiful immortals
 That with unwearied feet day after day,
 Explored undreamed-of beauties through the dingles,
 Or, by the fountains danced the hours away!

"Bimini! Hail Bimini!" cried the sailors,
 Full often as they swept the Spanish Main,
 And turned to tell their comrades, but Bimini
 Had far receded when they looked again.
 Life, then, alas! became a dream of longing,
 The heart aye haunted with the memory,
 Of that one isle, all other isles excelling,
 And other Future Hope refused to see.

* Pronounced *Bemeene*.

Ah! many of us yet on Life's rough voyage,
See, just before us, rise that island fair,
And watching, praying, striving to o'ertake it,
Behold it far away fade into air.
Bimini! oh, Bimini! lovely island!
To us *our all* thou surely couldst restore,
Thou hast not only founts and flowers immortal;
Thou hast our loved ones on thy fadeless shore.

BABY FINGERS

EVERYBODY always knew that from the olden times
Mothers counted baby's fingers saying pretty rhymes;
But I knew a little woman — oh! so long ago —
Used to sing a nonsense-jingle you would like to know.
Lifting up the baby fingers, one, and two and three,
On the left hand, on the right hand, smiling merrily,
On the left hand very slowly, on the right hand fast,
Leaving thumbs and little fingers till the very last,
She would say — be sure her baby laughed aloud with glee,
O how strange! the little baby laughing then was me:
“ One little horsey, two little horsies, three little horsies
All in a row,
Four little horsies, five little horsies, six little horsies
Away they go!
And one little pony, and two little ponies
Snowy white,
And three little ponies, and four little ponies
Black as night;
And three horsies standing, and three that go,
And four little ponies make ten, you know!”
Oh! that every little baby of the future time,
Would be just as blessed as I was when I heard this rhyme.

CLOTH OF GOLD

READING, I said, "No page again can be
Like this brave pageant of the days of old
Named the proud name, 'Field of the Cloth of Gold,'"
And sighed that Fate had not permitted me
In this dull age so fair a sight to see;
Then, closed my book and smiled, smiled to behold
A sight whose splendor never can be told,
A scene of beauty and of mystery,—
Velvet of gold so yellow, gold so red,
In flowers, by leaves like sea-green shields uplifted;
And there were spurs as bright as knight e'er wore,
While over all a glory-light was shed,
Where the soft summer sunlight downward drifted,
On the Nasturtion bed beside my door.

GRANDFATHER'S TALK WITH LITTLE PHILIP

(Suggested by a passage from Thoreau)

I.

I DREAMED that my splendid bay horse, all my own,
Which for beauty and strength stood unrivaled, alone,
Should bear me from country to country in pride,
Fame's crown on my forehead, her sword by my side.

II.

I dreamed that my beautiful greyhound, so fleet
That scarcely the wind could keep pace with his feet,
Would never forsake, but be true and more true,
When thorns choked my pathway, and blossoms were few.

III.

I dreamed, too, the one dove that answered my call,
Whose voice was most clear and most tender of all,
Though shadows might deepen and sunshine depart,
Would nestle more fondly and close to my heart.

IV.

And now a wee whisper I'll whisper to you:
These dreams that I dreamed, Phil, they never came true;
My horse fled when night-tide was starry and still,
I heard his far hoof-beats fall faint o'er the hill;

V.

Lost forever, I sighed not, nor wept, in my pride,
Caressing the greyhound crouched close by my side;
But in the first snow-fall, I marked the last track
Of this fleet-footed beauty; he never came back.

VI.

The sweet cooing dove, with its plumage of white,
Ah! then how I watched it, by day and by night!
But once, when bright clouds fringed the sunset's fair shore,
My dove soared up 'midst them, and came back no more.

VII.

Still, blithe are the thoughts to my steed that go back,
And happy in fancy the greyhound I track,
Oft my dove-seeking vision I strain through the blue,
Yet know that the dreams I dreamed can not come true.

AT CHRISTMAS-TIDE

IF WINTER winds be blowing wild
Across the meadows white with snow,
They tell to every little child
One story — wheresoe'er they go —
Of Santa Claus in furry dress;
Of reindeer, with their nimble feet
And tinkling bells, that forward press
With toys and candies fair and sweet.

If all the heaven with stars is bright,
Over the mountain and the moor,
The dear old tale is told to-night
In palace hall and cottage poor;
About the star that shone of old —
The star that led to Bethlehem —
When shepherds on the hillside cold
Heard angel voices sing to them.

If all around is peace and rest,
Each mother on this happy day
Thinks, with her baby on her breast,
Of one that in a manger lay.
We know the gospel gift to men
Is rarer, richer, many fold,
Than all the wise men offered then
Of myrrh and frankincense and gold.

BEFORE THE DAWN

FROM the far-away West,
O'er the Isles of the Blest,
Comes a wind, ere the breaking of dawn.
And it bears on its wings
The most wonderful things
For the dreamer who wakes — to dream on.

Treasures lost long ago,
We had wept over so,
Its tones bring again within reach.
And the story half-told
In the dear days of old
Flows on through its musical speech.

Then, as thistle down fair,
Floating here, floating there,
On its pinions we wander away,
Where the roses are bright
In a shadowless light
As in childhood's most Eden-like day.

Aye, we bask in the shine,
Of a glamour divine,
While that mystical anthem peals on.
Till our spirits have caught
All untroubled by thought
Rays from thought's own ineffable dawn.

OVER A CRADLE

LIKE an image marble made
Pale and passionless he lies,
Mute the laughter of his lips,
Veiled the gladness of his eyes.

Quietness upon his feet
Is a wonder to behold,
And the dainty clasped hands seem
Some sweet mystery to enfold.

If through poppy-bordered paths
Now he drinks the drowsy air;
If he follows butterflies
Floating over dream-fields fair;

If he hears the seraph song
Far above the farthest star;
If he knows the joys that be
Where the fadeless flowers are,

I, his mother, may not guess!
But I know too sadly well,
Waking thought must fail to keep
Raptures language cannot tell.

And I muse, as in a dream,
With a sorrow all unsaid,
Of the waking waiting me
When his babyhood is fled.

BABY'S LETTER

HERE in this casket you may behold
 Something more precious to me than gold,
 For the crumpled scrap of paper there,
 Enclosing a tress of soft, bright hair,
 And penciled over so cunningly,
 Is my wee grandson's letter to me,
 Where not in vain did his babyhood
 Struggle to make himself understood.

A world of odors, and light, and song,
 Such as to infancy belong,
 Seem part of this letter; for, don't you see,
 He is just as sweet as a baby can be.
 To think the darling — you needn't laugh —
 Marked lines like this at a year and a half,
 With his blessed own little dimpled hand,
 And sent them to me out of Babyland!

His words still few, he scarce has met
 The fitting ones for his purpose yet.
 But the love in his all-loving breast
 Beyond expression is here expressed.
 These comical crooks and awkward angles,
 And twisted lines, like thread in tangles,
 Are riddles, riddles that grandma guesses
 To be storms of chokingly close caresses.

And what was ever more plain than this
 Circle, his mother labels, "a kiss."
 A prophecy of love's new romance,
 Bringing the old to remembrance.
 This letter shows clear as a heavenly ray,
 The angel side of my mortal way,
 And crowned, I behold my grandboy stand
 On the sunniest summit of Babyland.

A CELTIC LEGEND

WILD and weird and sweet the story,
 How the unexampled skill
 Of the Celtic Wise Men's art
 Forces of great Nature's heart
 Could make subject to their will.

Holy Gwydeon for his pupil
 Fain would find a wife most fair,
 "Thou and I," said Math the Great,
 "Searching field and forest straight,
 Gathering flowers here and there

"Of the stately oak-tree's tassels,
 Of the wild broom's yellow spray,
 With the tufted meadow sweet,
 Growing where the sunbeams fleet
 Chase the shadows all the day,

"Will a beauteous maiden fashion,
 Of our work the crown and pride;
 In her form and in her face
 Shall the sweetness and the grace
 Of these blooms be glorified!"

Mighty Math and Holy Gwydeon
 From the morning's earliest ray
 Prayerful wander up and down,
 Fasting, oh! so weary grown,
 After daylight fades away.

Then the loveliness together,
 Flower of stalk, and shrub, and tree,
 Under midnight's moonlight fair,
 Wove they, till before them there
 Stood the maid of mystery.

Awed, the Wise Men from each other's
 Glances turn to meet her glance,
 And from deeps of azure eyes,
 See above a vague surprise,
 Trembling rays of gladness dance.

When again the golden sunshine
 Glinted gay the greenwood through,
Said the pupil, as he pressed
Gwydeon's gift-bride to his breast,
 "Sweeter blossom never grew."

A RECOLLECTION

I WAS but a little child,
 When a woman old and grey,
 Stern to others, still to me
 Had a pleasant word to say,
 With a sadly tender tone,
 Holding in her hand my own.
 Once she told, still haunting me
 Like a long-loved melody,

How, far off, her little child
 Passed from earth forevermore;
 How she kept within her heart,
 Ever conning o'er and o'er,
 All his ways and all his words;
 What he said about the birds;
 What he thought about the skies,
 And his dream of paradise.

He was such a happy child,
 Finding joy in everything,
 Drinking in the streamlet's song
 And the wind's low whispering;
 Setting marigolds afloat
 On the brook in leafy boat,
 Saying, then, from shore to shore
 Fairy folk were sailing o'er.

He was such a gentle child,
 Oh, so winsome in his ways!
 Changeful, too, from shine to shade,
 Like the passing summer days.
 Once he found a robin dead;
 Down he bowed his little head,
 And with such a solemn sigh
 Murmured low, "Good-bye, good-bye."

“Ah! he was a wondrous child,
And his fancies flew so far,
Saw delight in every cloud
And a friend in every star;
Thought the sunshine sifted gold,
Never knew a moon was old;
But he loved me most of all
Till he heard the angels call.

“For the angels called my child
From his lovely world below
To the lovelier one above;
It was best that he should go,
While his spirit was so pure,
To its glory, I am sure;
But my heart died then, and see!
’Tis a weary world to me.”

From the time I was a child,
Still her talk has haunted me,
That stern woman’s, old and grey,
Of her lost child’s infancy.
Deepest rapture, wildest woe,
It had been her lot to know;
And her words have still for me
Some pure poem’s majesty.

CROSSING THE DELAWARE

DARKLY hangs the winter midnight on the war-beleaguered land,
 Onward toward the swollen river press a little patriot-band,
 Spent with famine, worn and weary marching through the crusted snow,
 Where the crimson blood-tide flowing stains their pathway as they go.

Long and nobly have they striven to resist the tyrant's power,
 Now their brave hearts sink within them, 'tis their country's gloomiest hour,
 And each hopeless face is shadowed by a fixed and sullen frown,
 As they watch the angry waters with the ice-isles rushing down;
 While a requiem the tempest seems for Liberty to sing,
 And the waves in wild upheaving the last knell of Hope to ring.

But calmly stands their leader by the foaming torrent's brink,
 And their looks are turned upon him, as they pause, but do not shrink;
 And he meets those mournful glances with a father's pitying eye,
 For he knows they will not fail him, that they do not fear to die:
 They but fear their arms are powerless to protect the land they love,
 Fear their cause is all unheeded by the God who rules above.
 But he speaks in cheering accents to the faint, disheartened band,
 Bids them think of homes and firesides — think upon their native land;
 Rouses them for one strong effort that may break oppression's chain,
 Bids them rally for the struggle, fall upon their foes again:
 "While the broad wings of their army wide and vulture-like expand,
 With their hateful blackness brooding over all the Jersey-land,
 We may clip their spreading pinions if we strike a sudden blow;
 Come, my brothers, stern and steady, answer quickly, Will you go?"
 Thus he speaks, and bares his temples, and the soldiers looking on,
 Grasp their arms and shout in chorus: "We will follow WASHINGTON!"

They have caught his hero-spirit, throbs each heart more wildly now,
 For there seems a sudden glory to have settled on his brow;
 While his clarion voice comes ringing deep and clear above the blast,
 And for him, where'er he lead them, they will battle to the last.
 Let the snow and hail come sweeping fiercely down the dismal shores,
 And the tempest's voice grow louder in the rocking sycamores;
 Now they heed not storm or midnight, chilling wind or driving hail,
 As they dare the foaming river, where the stoutest heart might quail.

And again they're marching forward, stiff with cold and pierced with pain,
Toward the enemy's encampment, far across the frozen plain;
With a more than Spartan courage lighting up each dauntless eye,
Swift and silent, firm and fearless, on they go, to do or die.
Brooding now with thoughts of vengeance on the hurried retreat
Made across the alarméd country from Long-Island's sad defeat;
Now with hopeful pride remembering Concord Bridge and Lexington:
Oh! that on this night of darkness such another day might dawn!

Where the sentinels are pacing in the early morning's beams,
Where the unsuspecting foemen waken out of peaceful dreams:
Dreams perchance of wives and children, many a gentle-hearted band,
As they keep the merry Christmas, in the distant fatherland,
Knowing not of danger near them — see, the little army comes,
And with sudden start they listen to the roll of rebel-drums!

Now the tide of battle surges far and near, and loud and deep,
As with head-long desperation down upon the foe they sweep;
With a thought of home and kindred strengthening every deadly blow —
GOD of Freedom, GOD of Justice, aid the holy struggle now!
Fiercely patriot and invader mingle in the stormy fray,
In the annals of Columbia this will be a glorious day!
For they see in death the sinking of the foeman leader, RAHL,
See the hireling Hessians flying, see the lion standard fall;
And where clear away the war-clouds, when the battle-hour is done,
Lo! the Eagle soars in triumph, and the victory is won!

OUR DEAD PRESIDENT

HIGH in the heavens Jehovah hath his throne,
Thick clouds and darkness are his secret place,
But tender was the voice that called his own,
"Come to my presence and behold my face."
Yet we are mourning, all uncomforted —
A mighty people, pouring our lament
On the wild autumn winds, for he is dead,
Our chosen chief, our Christian President.

Oh! our good soldier, brave, and true, and tried,
Thy country's sons all comrades by thy side,
Felt every pain that thou wert called to feel —
Son, husband, father, though we think of thee
At rest, and crowned with immortality,
Thy God and ours alone our woe can heal.

THE THREE POETS

YOUTH, the proud poet, chanting joyous measures,
Crossed the fair meadows from his mother's door,
Behind him childhood, butterflies and blossoms,
And manhood's beaten highway still before.
And wheresoe'er he would his feet might wander,
And wheresoe'er he sat it seemed a throne,
So long for him the happy world had waited
It smiled anew to claim him as its own.

Then Love, the dreamer poet, followed after,
And all the radiance of the starry spheres,
All tenderness of twilights, and of moonlights,
All wondrous mysteries of smiles and tears;
The secrets hidden in the rose's bosom,
The passion thrilling through the wild bird's lay,
He sang of sweetly, as he sang in Eden,
For Eden's gladness glorified his way,
And Love had wings and Youth was overtaken,
Ah! then, for both 'twas blessedness to be.
Fond Youth in exultation, Love enraptured,
Sang to each other hymns of ecstasy.

Death, kingly poet, met the twain together,
And while his anthem rolled its swelling tide
Across the nations, Youth and Love to hear it,
With broken harp strings and hushed voices, died;
But, as earth's wailings sounded up to heaven,
The master poet spake, not bitterly,
"Children of Time, ye blame me in your blindness,
For these were not immortal but for me."

STILL SMALL VOICES

IT WAS only the sigh of the wind
Where a reed was shaking,
But it said to me my far-off love
Knew my heart was breaking,
Knew it was breaking and fain would he
Come on the wind's wings to comfort me.

When no ripple of wave or of grass
Was on lake or meadow,
When skies were blue and the lissome reed
Stood still with its shadow,
All the deep silences seemed to be
Bringing my loved one's blessing to me.

Of this mystery spell in the air,
With its currents flowing
'Tixt soul and soul, must I only know
'Tis beyond my knowing?
So let it be, since my sorrow fled
And I but feel I am comforted.

PANIC AND CRISIS

I'VE a "panic" girl and a "crisis" boy.
Ah, me, but they make me a world of woe!
I try to be quiet, I try to rest,
But I hear their voices and off I go,
Swift to the rescue and swift to the work.
She's crying, "A spider! Oh, let me in!"
He says, "Hurry, mother! button my shoe;
The bell is ringing for school to begin."

My girl is a beauty, with golden hair,
And I love her with mother-love most true,
But I'm quite distracted to think of her
In a constant state of "What shall I do?"
I look on the face of my boy with pride
When from his rosy mouth comes the old song,
"Mother, this minute, come help me to start!
Quick! they are calling me—hurry along!"

Must I carry weapons for her defense—
A broom or a poker, or this or that—
And fly at his bidding as if a serf
And he an unterrified autocrat,
All the bright days of the summer and fall,
All the weeks of winter and spring-time through,
With no escape? But the "Panic" is here;
And, pity me! here is the "Crisis," too,

Rushing upon me. I open the door
To hear her "Goodness! there comes a cow!"
And he calls, "Just give me the hatchet—quick!
For my father must have it, and have it right now."
My girl in a tremble, my boy in haste,
I'm all in a fever, they fret me so.
Run, "Crisis," to father; come, "Panic," to me:
You're the dearest plagues in the world, I know.

LEGEND OF A PICTURE

IN A DIMLY lighted chamber
 Day by day an Artist wrought,
 While his gentle wife beside him —
 Fair as some immortal thought —
 Was the model for the picture
 That he dreamed would place his name
 High among the shining planets
 In the holy heaven of fame.

Never weary grew the Artist
 Though the summer-time was bright,
 And there came into his chamber
 Nothing of its bloom and light;
 Only gazed he on the beauty
 Of her perfect face, and then
 Patiently across the canvas
 Bade its beauty glow again.

And when she at last grown weary
 Pining for the sunlight's smile,
 Fondly clasped his neck and whispered —
 Whispered low and sighed the while —
 "Love, rememberest thou the even
 When we sat the spring beside
 In the valley of the Tyrol
 Ere I came to be thy bride?

"When thou said'st about my singing
 I had caught the wild-bird's tone
 And the rivulet's low laughter
 Was an echo of my own,
 Then compared my forehead's whiteness
 To the mountain's crown of snow;
 Said my cheek was like the wild rose
 Blooming in the vale below?

Fairer even than thine the pictures
 Summoned by my fancy's power,
 Of the peasant youths and maidens
 Lingering there this twilight hour;
 And I fain would see my brothers
 On the hill side tend their sheep,
 See my mother by the hearth-stone
 Where she lulls the babe to sleep."

Answered he, "My homesick darling
 To the Tyrol wouldst thou go!"
 Then he kissed the lips and forehead
 That his genius worshiped so;
 And again he plied his pencil
 While the lady sat and dreamed
 Of childhood and her childhood's home
 Until doubly dear they seemed.

Passed away the rosy summer,
 Came the autumn's soft eclipse,
 When before the finished picture
 With Eureka on his lips,
 Knelt the Artist, all his spirit
 Filled with rapture most divine;
 "See," he cried, "the world shall worship
 Loved one at thy beauty's shrine!"

But despair has followed rapture
 As he sees the last faint ray
 Of the life that he had stolen
 For his picture die away.
 Gone the lustre from her tresses
 And the life-light from her eyes,
 While her faded lips but tremble
 To her spirit's passing sighs.

Feels he then, the selfish Artist,
 That he ne'er shall see his name
 Shining with a star-like lustre
 From the holy heaven of Fame.
 Pale and cold the lady lieth,
 Twilight deepens; he is lone;
 But his spirit's wing is broken
 And his earthly labor done.

As the peasants on the morrow,
Found the painter and his bride
Silent in the sleep eternal,
So they laid them side by side,
While the village bells were tolling,
Gently in the churchyard's clay,
But the great world never mourned for
Genius, beauty passed away.

This the legend of a picture,
Oval framed and curtained round,
In a dimly lighted chamber
Of a ruined castle found.
Whose the master hand that wrought it
Never, never shall be known.
Moonlight that enhances beauty
Is the romance o'er it thrown.

A PHOTOGRAPH

To E. G. W.

IN JAUNTY coat and sailor hat
She came when day was fading,
When I was lone, and all was still
Save a cricket's serenading.

She said no word nor smiled on me,
Seemed lost in meditation ;
But all the while my soul was thrilled
With a sudden strange elation.

I smiled, I'm sure, and all these words
I give the gentle comer,
Not sweeter has the presence been
Of any flower this summer.

OBLIVION

MAN is Nature's worshiper,
 Though she loves him not;
Evermore he thinks of her,
 While by her forgot.

He to con her secrets goes
 Over sea and land,
Still of him she nothing knows
 Nor could understand.

After he has lived and loved —
 If he lost or won —
She his record gives, unmoved,
 To Oblivion.

RECOMPENSE

I'VE a hope, a dear and beautiful hope,
That I name to none— shall I tell you why?
It would seem so wild to my dearest friend,
That to meet his look of scorn it would die.

As I lay on my tear-wet pillow one night,
An angel brought me a dream divine;
But I know, should I tell it, its charm would fade,
The charm is this — It is wholly mine.

And a sorrow I have, too deep for words,
The strange sweet sorrow that fixed my fate;
When joys deserted, more closely it clung;
Now, without it, my soul were more desolate.

In another land, where the hope shall bloom,
From the stem of the stalk whose root was below;
The friend of my heart will be there to see,
And all my fullness of joy shall know.

And the angel that bro't me the wondrous dream,
Will teach me how to translate it there,
Into holier language, and so divide
The bliss that alone were too great to bear.

And there the old sorrow, my sorrow, will burst
From a chrysalis dark on pinions wide,
A glorious rapture, and never to die,
Still mine, and my soul be satisfied.

WHY SHOULD WE ?

WHY should we weep, when faithful memory shows
That not one dream of all our youth came true?
Are not our present griefs enough for us,
Our joys more precious when we find them few?

Why should we hate the rival now, whose hand
Plucked the lone lily that our love had nursed?
Have we not also planted thorny stalks,
Upon whose twigs most royal roses burst?

Why should we sigh that in Life's warfare wild
The victory seemed ever with the foe?
We struck for Right, the enemy for Wrong,
The triumph yet to come is ours, we know.

Let us be happy, then, though we grow old,
Holding the present hour still the best,
We need not struggle more, will not repine,
The holiest time is now, the evening rest.

LITTLE TEE WEE

LITTLE Tee Wee
 He went to sea
 In an open boat ;
 And while afloat
 The boat is bended,—
 My tale is ended.—*Mother Goose.*

This little Tee Wee
 Who went to sea,
 I've somewhere read
 Was a young Chinee.
 Of pluck and beauty he had no lack,
 And the shining pig-tail at his back
 Went a-growing down, and down, and down,
 The admiration of all the town.

His robes they were rich
 And fair to see,
 With golden thread
 In the broidery.
 But by the beach of the sunny sea,
 Once all alone, strayed little Tee Wee,
 And said to himself: "The baby-play
 With sand and shells I will quit straightway.

"Tis jolly to go,"
 Said he, "I know,
 Far out from land
 Where the wild winds blow ;
 I'll just step into this rocking boat,
 And in a minute I'll be afloat.
 I'm a sailor now ; O land, farewell !
 When I return, what a tale I'll tell."

But oh, and alas !
 It wasn't first-class,
 This little boat ;
 So it came to pass

That it bended first, then broke in two,
And little Tee Wee went "Boo, hoo, hoo!"
Above the wreck, and would have sunk
But for the friendly crew of a junk.

They telephoned then,
These sailor men,
Tee Wee's home folks
That to land again
Their most adventurous boy returned,
Was down at the wharf, with fame well-earn'd,
Where Tee Wee's sire came with emphatic
Words, and gestures somewhat dramatic.

Poor, dripping Tee Wee!
So scared was he,
His pig-tail shook
Like himself, to see
That mad old mandarin's lifted stick,
Compelling a march at double quick
Straight home, where his mother into the suds
Soused, while she scolded, his lovely duds;
And till they were dry, poor little Tee Wee,
Curled in a rug, was a sorry Chinee.

SUNSHINY MIKE

RED-HAIRED Mikey McGrew,
With his mother so true,
Lives down a back alley from me;
And whene'er I look out,
Just what he is about
In the bare, narrow yard I can see.

Oh, poor dear little Mike!
One would think he would like
Companions; he cares not a fig
For the girls that he meets,
Nor the boys in the streets,
But plays with a little pet pig.

And this morning I heard
Every grunt, every word,
Of almost a row 'twixt the two;
For when Mikey said "No,"
Pig insisted he'd go
A crack in the boarded fence through.

Sure the cold made him cry,
And the fence was so high,
While goslings and ducks in the sun
Were so gay over there
He just bristled each hair
And asked that but justice be done,

Did the pig; but then Mike,
Tender-hearted, spoke, like
The friend that he was, hopeful words:
"Darlint piggy of mine,
Wait, the sun will soon shine
Round here, on this side of the boards!"

When poor piggy would still
Have his way and his will,
Soft-sounding came Mike's loving call:
"Oh, be patient like me,
Crayture dear! we'll soon see
The sunshine on this side the wall."

Bravo, Mikey McGrew!
I have gathered from you
This lesson of plain common-sense;
When the shadows of Fate
Gather dark, just to wait
Till the sun shines on my side the fence.

BERTHA THE SPINNER *

WHERE our forest-sheltered cottage stood
By a reed-margined, lonely stream,
Sunbeams and shadows tangled around,
A dreamy child, a part of a dream,
I listened the while my mother spun,
To her wheel's weird music, soft and low ;
As unseen crickets joined in the song,
That mystic song in the firelight's glow.

Full often, an undertone in the strain,
Came from some region, I did not know,
To tell me, spinners and cricket folk
Were linked together, since long ago.
I never had read the pages then,
Nor heard the tale from across the sea,
How Bertha of spinners the patroness
The Queen of Crickets used to be.

Were my impressions inherited
From some far ancestor's homely thought,
When was heard the insect minstrelsy,
With the wheels, where flax to thread was wrought?
I question vainly, but this I know,
All through a glamour of smiles and tears,
The legend old, and memory true,
Have kept for me, through the vanished years,

The tones of my mother's wheel, still sweet
As the Spinner Bertha waked I ween,
And cricket voices the very same,
As when in gladness, they hailed their Queen.
She must have dwelt, ere her legend grew,
In a forest home by a lonely stream ;
Sunbeams and shadows tangled around,
A dreamy spinner, herself a dream.

* Bertha, the Patroness of Spinners, was, according to the ancient legend, also the Queen of the Crickets.

THE BUTTER BUST

[The dreaming Iolanthe, King Rene's daughter, the Study in Butter, by Mrs. Caroline S. Brooks, which called out so much admiration at the Centennial Exposition, is here alluded to.]

THE dreaming beauty, with the soft closed eyes,
 The seraph mouth, and angel waving hair
 I stood before; entranced in wonderment
 That mortal hands could shape a face so fair.

What God-like living genius had the power
 To give to us this maiden dream of peace
 Embodied here? was asked; I answered them:
 "A female Phidias of our modern Greece,—

A farmer's wife." A woman at my side,
 She, too, a farmer's wife, all in a flutter
 Hastened to pluck my sleeve, correcting me:
 "No, 'taint a *model* maid of grease, she's made of butter."

GENESIS

THE scholar said, "Ere I begin
The study of man's origin,
I'll take a half hour's sketchy look,
Over the Bible's earliest book.
The Genesis, that Moses old,
The poet with the fancy bold,
Traced in earth's misty morning dim;
Doubtless 'twas pastime play to him
Its cunning statements so to weave
That simple folk the tale believe."

The scholar read; his critic's eye
Saw language crowned with majesty;
Saw sun and moon, and earth and sky,
A wonder-work of harmony.
Saw man supreme in Eden bowers,
And woman fair mid fadeless flowers,
Then, saw, those perfect aisles within,
Enter the hideous shape of Sin.
And, from the garden of the Lord
The pair sent, and the flaming sword
Wave o'er the gate, to guard the tree
Of Life, that man may never see
This side the grave. In wonderment
And rapture, o'er the page he bent
While humbled Reason dared not pause
To question of effect or cause.

No color false, no masquerade
Of tragic passions there displayed;
But, pictured in plain dignity,
Are men as men are wont to be.
He sees, beside the fountains fair,
Beauty to love, courage to dare;
Valleys and hills, and beasts and birds,
And busy folk with flocks and herds,
Plains with high towers builded on,
And shores where cities rise anon;

Sees steadfast faith a blessing win,
Death-dooms o'ertaking pride and sin;
And, 'twas so near Creation's birth,
Heaven dreams and angels come to earth.

Now smiled the scholar, and now sighed,
But read from noon to eventide,
Dwelling on that, lingering o'er this,
On to the end of Genesis.
With thoughts half transport and half pain,
He said, while tear-drops fell like rain,
"At last I tread the holy ground
That struggling Science never found,
Of glory, greatness manifold,
'In the beginning' Moses told,
But endeth thus his poem grand—
'A coffin in dark Egypt's land'.
Of man on earth who knoweth more
Than the great Leader penned of yore,
A voyager 'twixt shore and shore?"

A SCANDINAVIAN GIRL FOUND DEAD

A MAIDEN emigrant alone,
No friends no kindred near,
Her life interred in its dead past,
She had nor hope nor fear.

The prairie stretching wide away
To her it seemed not fair,
Nor wept she for her Norway home,
Her heart had broken there.

She saw far up the alien sky
The moon go climbing slow
Through a dim canyon of great clouds,
The mist gleam white below.

The mist gleamed white! a spectral sea,
The stars were drowned therein,
While winds came waiting as from realms
Where joy had never been.

The world looked strange, there seemed no Time
Nor any Hence nor Thence,
And but with haunting memory
Her soul held conference.

Ah! she and Memory, mournful twain,
They vainly tried to go
To some strange Somewhere out of Time
They surely used to know.

She questioned of the winds, the sky,
With all her spirit's might,
Prayed for one echo from its shore,
One ray of its lost light.

The moon looked lonelier 'mid the clouds,
And stiller grew the night,
And oh! that sea of mist it seemed
Too sorrowfully white.

Upon the morrow strangers laid
In Minnesota sand
Her form; her soul had gone to seek
The Unremembered Land.

THE BALLAD OF BEFFANA

[According to tradition, Beffana was a woman too busy with household duties, when the three Wise Men of the East went by with their treasures to offer to the Infant Saviour, to go out and see them, excusing herself on the grounds that she would have an opportunity of doing so when they returned. They, however, went home another way, and she, not knowing this, is still watching for them.]

“COME forth, come forth, Beffana!”
 She hears her neighbors say,
 “Come, up the road to Bethlehem,
 The Wise Men pass to-day!”

So busy was Beffana
 She scarcely turned her head;
 Here was the waiting linen,
 The waiting scarlet thread.

Again they cried, “Beffana,
 It is a glorious sight,
 Three Kings together journey
 In crowns and garments bright!”

Beffana saw the spindle,
 Her hand the distaff held;
 Her people’s skillful daughters
 As yet she had excelled.

Her husband’s words must praise her,
 Her children’s voices bless;
 She eateth in her household
 No bread of idleness.

So, she made haste to answer,
 “My house is all my care;
 No time have I for strangers
 Toward Bethlehem that fare!

“Ere yet the daytime cometh
 I give my household meat:
 Mine is the best-clad husband
 That hath an elder’s seat.

“And merchants know my girdles
And my woven tapestry,
The glory of my purple
And silk most fair to see!”

But now her kinsmen shouted,
You know not what you miss!
There may be many pageants,
Yet none be like to this!

“Men say the three Kings’ journey
A wondrous thing to see,
A Babe born of a Virgin
Foretold by prophecy.

“Oh! come; behold, Beffana!
For speech may never say
The splendor on their faces,
The Kings that ride this way!”

Beffana still kept busy,
But lightly answered then:
“I will look out upon them
As they come back again!”

But all her friends and kinsmen,
In wondering delight,
Gazed, till the Kings so gentle
Had journeyed out of sight.

That eve Beffana’s husband
Had sorrow in his gaze,
When of her work she told him,
Anticipating praise.

He did not quite upbraid her,
But out of ancient lore,
He questioned, “Who hath profit
In laboring evermore?”

And spake of times for mourning
And times to laugh and sing;
Of times to keep or scatter,
Of times for everything.

And, sad, Beffana answered:
 “My lord is right, but then
I surely will behold them
 As they come back again.”

Alas! alas! Beffana
 Looked out from day to day,
They came no more, God warned them
 To go another way.

And she grew very weary
 Who had so much to do,
And never came the vision
 That might her strength renew.

Beffana dieth never,
 This earth is still her home;
Beffana looketh ever
 For those who never come.

SONG OF MORNING

I COME, oh earth, rejoice!
 Ever on thee my softest smile was shed,
 Since first before my steps the darkness fled—
 When called by God's own voice,

I came in robes of light,
 To clothe thy form with loveliness and bloom,
 From out the shadowy void, the dreadful gloom
 And chaos of old Night.

Rejoice, I come once more!
 Swiftly uprising in my shining car,
 The brightness of my glory streaming far,
 From distant shore to shore.

I dart in sudden gleams
 Through the dim arches of the forest bowers,
 And send my sunbeams to awake the flowers
 And gild the laughing streams.

And when the ivy twines
 Round broken columns, temples ruined now,
 Forgotten cities, palaces laid low,
 And desolated shrines;

Where fierce volcanoes blaze,
 Or snow-capped mountains seem to prop the sky;
 Or where on ocean's breast, bright islands lie—
 I pour my equal rays.

I walk o'er land and wave,
 Spurning the darkness, and go up the sky
 In triumph, as freed spirits mount on high,
 Spurning the gloomy grave.

Mortals, awake!—'tis I!
 Mantled and crowned with loveliness and light—
 I come to reign awhile with regal might,
 In peerless majesty.

Mark how each shadow flies
At my approach, and see what hope sublime
And joy I bring; Night is the only time
For mournful memories.

Oh, never, since my birth,
Have I refused my kindly light to thee —
Save when in that dread hour on Calvary,
Sickened I turned from earth.

Come forth to greet me now!
Bask in my beams, be with my winds caressed,
Come forth to toil, and then a sweeter rest
Shall settle on each brow.

Me shall your sons adore
In coming ages; me shall Nature greet
With welcome smile, and voices glad and sweet,
Till Time shall be no more.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

ONE glorious picture oft uncalled, but welcome,
 Rises before me from a vanished time.
 The strangeness of its beauty falling o'er me
 Like the rich twilight of a sunny clime.

'Tis never out of season — that old story
 The picture brings me — for I con it o'er
 And find it wondrous in the time of blossoms,
 And in the ripening time grand as before.

Where floors of marble wind through gates of beauty,
 I gaze, the carven glories all between,
 And see, within a hall enthroned, a monarch
 Goodly of form and beautiful of mien.

There seems a solemn passion in the silence
 To throb and thrill, as there before the king,
 Two women, deathly pale with strife and anguish,
 A fair young babe into the presence bring.

And one is youthful — her dark eyes and tresses,
 And glossed brown cheeks, telling of Egypt's strand —
 The full, soft, melancholy lips resembling
 The immemorial statues of her land.

But sadder than the wail of wearied exile,
 Comfortless by the stranger's river-wave —
 Sadder than distant strains of wedding-music
 To widow by her husband's new-made grave,

Is the great woe that presses on her spirit,
 The troubled visions in her eyes that shine,
 And the mad fondness thrilling through the fingers
 That with the baby-fingers clutch and twine.

Her sorrow-freighted thoughts go backward — backward
 Where Joy was found disguised Misery;
 So much, so much is lost, yet in her bosom
 The mother-love from every stain is free.

And simple words flow from her heart's deep sorrow :
 "At midnight, while I lay upon my bed,
 This living child was stolen from my bosom,
 This woman gave to me her baby dead :

"Thy handmaid slept, O king! as one who trusted
 Her treasure safe, and waking turned to see
 What Death had kissed, but lo! the grace was wanting
 And beauty of the dear one born to me.

"Thou, that in wisdom rulest thine own people,
 Judge with just judgment from thy righteous throne ;
 Thou, who art ever merciful to strangers,
 Favored of Heaven, oh, give to me mine own !"

The other speaks. Her beauty to my spirit
 The presence of "a joy forever" brings ;
 While even with awe I mark her eye's cold splendor
 Meet with a level glance the mighty king's.

Judea's lily-buds in early girlhood
 Had made the fitting garland for her brow ;
 And still that brow is fair, but she, the fallen,
 Would for its decking pluck no lily now.

She stands before the king in robe of scarlet,
 In vain delights of fringe and clasp of gold,
 And skilled embroiderer's work and lace of purple,
 For these — for these — her better life was sold.

Fearful she stands, and yet with prideful scorning,
 Her bosom shakes her showery hair beneath ;
 While her small foot stamps a defiant menace,
 And her height seems to grow with every breath.

Now her eyes drop, her lips part, and she utters
 Her story with a feigned simplicity :
 "My lord, the king, she has reversed the story —
 Her child is dead ; this child belongs to me."

Out-spake the king : "Go, bring a sharp sword hither —
 Divide the child — give unto each a part ;
 The story is the very same they tell me,
 So will I satisfy each mother-heart !"

Would that thy soul, oh, daughter of Judea,
Soared up like Deborah's, or as Ruth's were pure!
Is Pity's fountain frozen in thy bosom,
That this with bitter smile thou couldst endure?

But loneliest wind that moans across the desert,
Or cypress whispering by a sepulchre,
Breathes not such woe as that Egyptian's pleading:
"Let the child live — even give it unto her!"

Then the king smiles; the sword sleeps in its scabbard:
"Dark Egypt's daughter, thou the mother art!
Press with thy lip's thy babe's, clasp him, caress him;
How a king's words make summer in the heart!"

And Judah's daughter saw, and all the people,
And fearing, praised the judgment of the king;
Better than rubies was the wealth God gave him,
Wisdom that was and is unperishing.

Great Solomon! the glories of thy Temple
Earth could not keep; but from the mighty Past
Thy words of wisdom echo, and the Ages
Repeat and glorify and hold them fast.

THE SAD DISCIPLE

(Matt. xix, 16-22)

FAIR as a day of the summer-time, fled with my far-away childhood,
 Out of the storied Past there arises before me a picture,
 So clear in its tone, and so deep in its shadow, I see there
 The truth of a human life fade in the light of the truth out of
 Heaven.

I see 'mid the God-beloved scenes of the land of Judea,
 A youth that gave heed to his father, and walked by the words of
 his mother,
 Whose heart was as pure in his breast as the lily that bloomed by the
 streamlet,
 While bright as the hues of the rose were his dreams of the Future.

Great was his joy when he heard of the words and the works of the
 Master,
 And he turned from his flocks, and his stores, and went straight to
 his presence;
 And meekly he asked of the things of the heavenly kingdom,
 And listened, the while his heart swelled with a rapturous wonder.

With low-spoken words then he told how he kept the command-
 ments,
 And bright grew the glance of his eye when the Saviour com-
 mended;
 But, ah! when he learned that the one thing yet that was needful
 Was to part, for the sake of the poor, with his worldly possessions.

Mournfully over his face weary shadows came creeping —
 Away from the Saviour, the Truth that he loved, he departed.
 If his steps were retraced, or if he his riches relinquished,
 No history tells; and we muse on his life — as he on that lesson —
 in sorrow.

A TRUE STORY

THE little boy in the north was crying,
 "I would I could live where oranges grow!"
The little girl in the south was sighing,
 "Oh, dear, how I wish I could see it snow!"

The boy, when grown to be two and twenty,
 Got into a ship and sailed till he found
An island lovely with orange orchards,
 And where it was summer the whole year round.

He found her there, the beautiful maiden
 That ever from childhood had pined for snow;
And he wove her a crown of orange flowers
 While her cheek blushed red as the sunset's glow.

And they were married — so runs the story —
 And he brought her home to his native coast;
But all through the winter's blowing and snowing
 She wept for the visions of childhood lost.

So, back again to the orange island
 They sailed in the spring-time, this youthful pair;
For her 'twas heaven, for him, poor fellow,
 'Twas ever too sultry for comfort there.

So they went sailing backward and forward,
 Till their married life was a sorry dish;
And friends quit hoping to see them happy,
 These people, who wished what they didn't wish.

YESTERDAY

IT WAS a fact, but it passed away.
'Tis memory now, its name is yesterday.
What if it stayed not? All it brought is mine,
The shade of sorrow, and of joy the shine,
And both are precious, priceless aids to me
Solving the problem of Life's mystery.

TO-MORROW

Yes, it will come, though Fate to guard it now
Draws a dark veil before its wondrous brow,
But surely, if I live, it will be mine
Adding to Life's strange page another line.
But if it brings to me or joy or shame,
Ere I behold it, it will change its name.

AT THE CAVE ADULLUM

David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullum.
 And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.
—1st Samuel, 22d Chapter, 1, 2 verses.

METHINKS I see him standing, sad and grave,
 The youthful hero at Adullum's Cave,
 When skies were clouded and when days were chill,
 When nights were mournful and the winds blew shrill;
 Fugitive David lone and wondering
 Where to find refuge from an angry King.

Not long alone was he, from everywhere
 Judea's burdened children gathered there,
 The struggling debtor in his hopelessness,
 Those for long years weary with distress,
 The discontented with their discontent,
 The poor, the unemployed ones, hither went,
 And he their captain was; till presently
 Four hundred men made up his company.

The rich and lordly ones on every hand
 With mocking jests spoke of the "moneyed band,"
 While the King's officers made haste to chase
 The "outlaw forces" on from place to place.
 But day by day the little Army grew
 As Maon, Ziph and Hareth's forests knew,
 And many a friend was found throughout the land,
 And food was brought by woman's kindly hand.

And when the fame of David went abroad
 Forever rose the praise of Jacob's God,
 And still the Psalmist pleaded not in vain,
 For the Most High Oppression to restrain;
 Then sang how still while sun and moon endure
 God would in righteousness avenge the poor.

O, ye who falter and almost despair
Unmindful of the Heavenly Father's care,
Look back! see starting from Adullum's Cave
The few forlorn and outcast, but the brave,
Crossing deep wildernesses, rocky hills
But ever with the sweet-voiced mountain rills
The minstrel chieftain's wondrous voice they hear
Chanting aloud of victory, victory near.

O sing ye weary ones earth's ways along
Before the Lord the mighty David's song;
How to the wicked He hath set a bound,
How Justice yet will reach the world around.

JUBAL

Genesis, 4th chapter, and 21st verse

IN A DREAM-ENCHANTED bark I sailed
 Time's backward surging sea,
 Wearily sailed, where Oblivion's mists
 Hung coldly, heavily,
 Between me and the shore I sought —
 The land of mystery.

But vision-strengthened on I sped
 Till Ararat was passed,
 Then, the days of giants came and went
 A shadow vague and vast;
 The world that bordered Paradise
 I trod upon at last.

A world of verdure softlier fresh
 Than verdure now could be,
 Mosses, thick-starred with gem-like buds,
 And blossom-crowned each tree;
 And fairer yet, a glorious boy
 Stood face to face with me.

A child-like face with wondering eyes
 Clear as the summer air,
 A brow as bright as a sun-kissed cloud,
 A splendor of gold hair,
 And a tender mouth, I knew how Love
 Must love to linger there.

A dreamy tone twixt woe and mirth
 Pendulum like there swung,
 Where tripped a fount with silver feet
 Rushes and reeds among,
 While softest breezes wandering by
 A deeper meaning sung.

The boy with radiant face upturned
Listened with all his heart,
Till some glory-gilded vision caused
Tears in his eyes to start,
And a secret, sacred rapture moved
His lovely lips to part.

Thus spake he, as he stooped to pluck
A reed grown straight and fair,
"Surely, within this narrow cell
The lightly prisoned air
With touch and breath of mine shall wake
And speak a language rare!"

He gathered then rush fibers fine
And fashioned him a lyre,
Swept his fair fingers swiftly o'er,
While wild poetic fire
Flashed in his eyes, and loud he cried,
"I have my soul's desire."

And now the lyre's and now the pipe's
Sweet harmonies I heard,
Here low and sweet as when by winds
The daintiest leaves are stirred,
There free and wild and ringing far
Like some glad forest bird.

I wondered, smiled and waked, all thoughts
To a sweet joy subdued,
My dream had borne me even where
The beauteous Jubal stood,
Fashioning the shepherd's pipe and lyre
In the world's babyhood.

THE CROWNING OF MOSES

A TRADITION

IN THE palace hall, where her presence seemed
 As beautiful as a dream of song,
 Stood Pharaoh's daughter one summer day,
 The costly, carven glories among —
 Stood, while her face wore a radiant smile,
 And looked from the window toward the Nile.

She could see how the river lilies there,
 The wonderful, glorious things,
 Like birds with snowy bosoms,
 Like birds with silver wings —
 Or upward or downward softly go
 With the wavelet's rest or the wavelet's flow.

The soft winds whisper the same old tale
 To the rustling reeds on the river shore,
 They told when she walked with her maidens there;
 That summer-time, long before,
 When she found in the reed-made basket there
 The Jewish baby, so tender and fair.

E'en now she can see on the little head,
 The soft hair curling in rings of gold,
 The dimpled arms and the pretty hands,
 And the rosy feet, so wee and cold;
 And peeping the silken lashes through,
 The gentle eyes of a soft sea-blue.

But the princess turns as the door swings back,
 And the fair youth, Moses, steps within,
 With the fire of manhood lighting the eyes
 Where the sunshine of childhood has lately been.
 And sweetness and majesty, throned there,
 Shed their glory-light on his forehead fair.

O! the ceiling was fashioned gorgeously,
By cunning artists, in figures rare ;
And, like kingly trees of the forest, all
Ranged about the palace the pillars were ;
And splendor rested, till then unknown
Throughout all the earth, upon Pharoah's throne.

And the great king slept in his chamber now ;
But there on his throne was the gold-gemmed crown.
While Moses upon the princess smiled,
As he paced 'twixt the pillars, up and down,
And she looked from the youth to the crown on the throne,
And thought she would crown there a king of her own.

And just when the light of the sunsét bathed
Aisle, pillar, and dome with radiance red,
The soft white hands of the princess placed
Her father's crown of gold on the head
Of Moses, the lovely, the ever to be
Unrivaled for meekness and majesty.

First he looked in her beautiful eyes with the smile
That played through his dimples in childhood, when
At her bidding he told — from his mother learned —
Old Hebrew legends again and again.
Then sternly he looked in her face so sweet,
And her father's crown he set under his feet.

And vanished the sunset radiance then,
While shadows crept round the pillared hall,
Shuddered the ceiling and trembled the floor,
And pale grew the crown, gems, gold and all.
But Moses, the son of Amram's eye,
Flashed bright with the fire of liberty.

The daughter of Pharoah turned and wept,
Shading her face with her jeweled hands.
While the boy she had petted from babyhood
On her father's crown there proudly stands
In the deepening twilight, but he leaves her alone,
To place it again on the great, grand throne.

Oh! in after years, when the Red Sea wave,
Over Pharoah swept and his host of pride,
While the graceful, sweet-voiced Miriam sang
Of triumph high on the Asia side,
And Moses and his free people press
Onward toward the wilderness,

The daughter of Pharoah stands again
By the window within the pillared hall,
While the evil tidings the runners bring
Fling over her spirit a shadowy pall;
And fatherless, widowed, she bows her there,
As the memory comes, like an old despair,
Of the face of Moses gloomed o'er with a frown,
As he stood with his feet on her father's crown.

THE EVENING HYMN

"And when they had sung an hymn."—St. Matthew 26: 30

TO-NIGHT my heart goes backward
 To an evening Long Ago,
 And the music of sweet voices —
 Sweetest ever heard below —
 Through doorway and through lattice,
 Flooding all the twilight dim,
 And fond conjecture questions
 Of the hearers of the hymn —
 Christ and the Twelve were singing.

Did lambs upstart to listen,
 And young doves in their nest
 Awake to hear, and hearing
 See a vision of the Blest?
 Did fervent-hearted roses
 Know the old-time Eden strain,
 And breathless lilies struggle,
 Just to keep the sweet refrain?
 The Sinless One was singing.

Did grasses by the wayside
 Thrill with rapt expectancy,
 And Olive boughs wave lightly
 To the mystic melody?
 Did silver-toned glad waters
 Pause a moment in their play
 To learn those melting measures
 And to bear them far away,
 That the Son of Man was singing?

Did the stars, that in Time's morning
 Voiced an anthem of their own,
 Lean earthward now to hearken
 To a deeper, holier tone?
 And from the highest heaven,
 Did a glory-shining throng,
 Led by the great Saint Gabriel,
 Draw near to hear the song
 That Mary's Son was singing?

Surely the blest disciples,
 In that precious holy hour.
Joined with a solemn passion
 In the Savior's hymn of power.
The love compelling Master
 They would follow where He led;
His voice with theirs was blending
 And they must be comforted,
 For the Son of God was singing.

A MEXICAN IMAGE

FROM the melancholy gloom
Of a most majestic tomb,
In the land of Mexico,
Once a wanderer brought to me
This quaint image that you see,
Carven centuries ago.

Mark you the barbaric grace
Of the drooping hands, the face
Half pathetic, half severe,
With its lips so strange and strong,
Seeming to suppress a song
None are worthy now to hear?

From a world of mysteries old,
Faith forgotten, altars cold,
It has come, a god unknown.
Oh, to look the years across!
Oh, to know whose hand it was
Wrought it from the living stone!

Where, like visions of delight,
Lakes of waters cool and bright
Slept the sultry sun below,
And the mountains far away
Lifted to the Realms of Day
Crowns of never-melted snow;

Where were thorny cactus stems
Decked with rosy diadems,
And the sunflower's gorgeousness
Was a wonder to behold,
Spreading shields of bronze and gold
Over waste and wilderness;

Where volcanoes, rearing high,
Threatening peaks against the sky,
 Seemed like spectres of despair ;
Where the mighty condors came,
Wheeling swift, with eyes a-flame ;
 Where great gusts of terror were

Driven through the human frame,
When some awesome serpent came
 Suddenly upon the scene,—
Came foreboding evil doom
To the bower of brightest bloom,
 Bringing woe where joy had been ;

There, the unenlightened mind
Of the pagan strove to find
 Some lost light, some god to know ;
For this image that you see
Brings this message back to me
 Out of ancient Mexico.

But it tells me nothing more,
And Conjecture, on the shore
 Of Oblivion's wide sea,
Loses heart and turns away ;
For the stubborn Past will say
 Nothing of this deity.

Was it some poetic youth,
Earnest in his quest of Truth,
 Pale and patient and alone,
That with fasting and with prayer
Wrought, and in divine despair
 Died to see his god of stone ?

Ah, some sire of three-score years,
Mournfully, with troubled tears,
 May, his passion's pulse to still,
Have decreed his dream to dwell
Here, the ages hence to tell
 Of his yet unvanquished will.

Or, perchance, some woman sweet
Stole at eve, with timid feet,
 In devotion's holy mood,
To this rock beside the rill,
Where, with gentle-handed skill,
 In the moonlit solitude,

She, to mystic melody,
Shaped this image that you see ;
 Placed it, centuries ago,
In the melancholy gloom
Of a most majestic tomb,
 In the land of Mexico.

POETRY

ONCE Echo showed to me her gentle face,
And once a Shadow spoke sweet words to me,
Then Shadow-music married Echo-grace,
And lo! their fairer child was Poetry.

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